WHITE
November

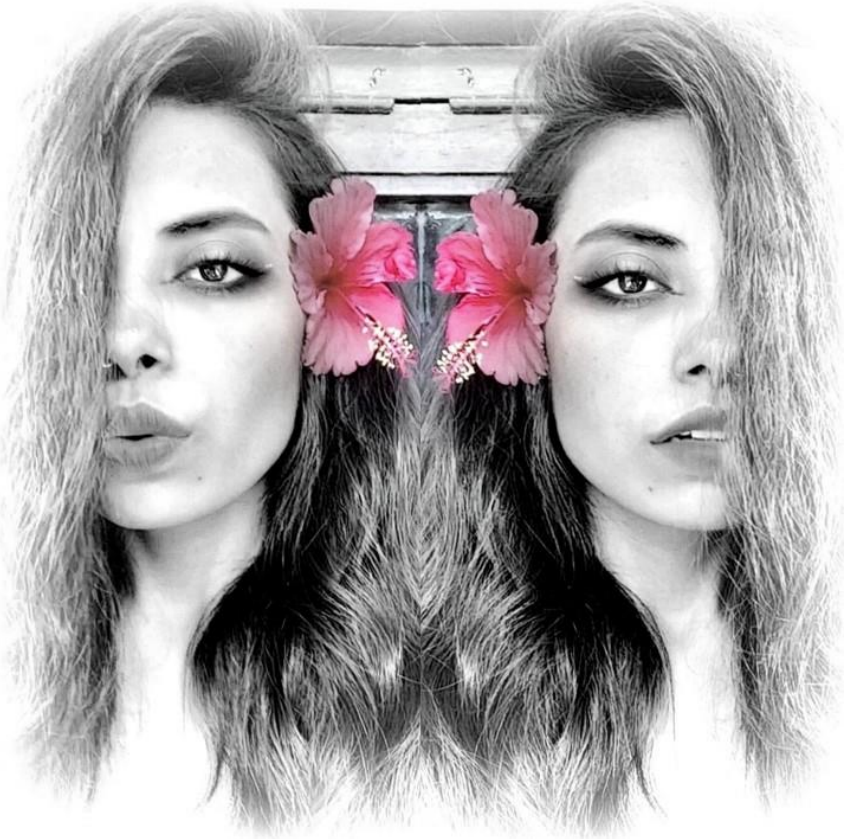
# WHITE November

A fairy tale

By Vandana "Imaan"

# To Life

*Dedicated to sentience, as an apology for existence without consent*



WHITE *November*

*White November* is not a collection of poems.

It is a record of harm.

These pieces were not written with audience in mind — they were written in the aftermath of silence.
They are what remained when language was no longer ornamental, when metaphor failed to shield, and only raw utterance was left.

This book does not seek healing.
It does not seek justice.
It does not seek closure.
It is a refusal — to beautify pain, to make palatable what was ethically unbearable.

Some of what is contained here is autobiographical.

Some was witnessed.
Some was empathically inherited — carried through others' wounds as if they were my own.
All of it is true. Not invented.

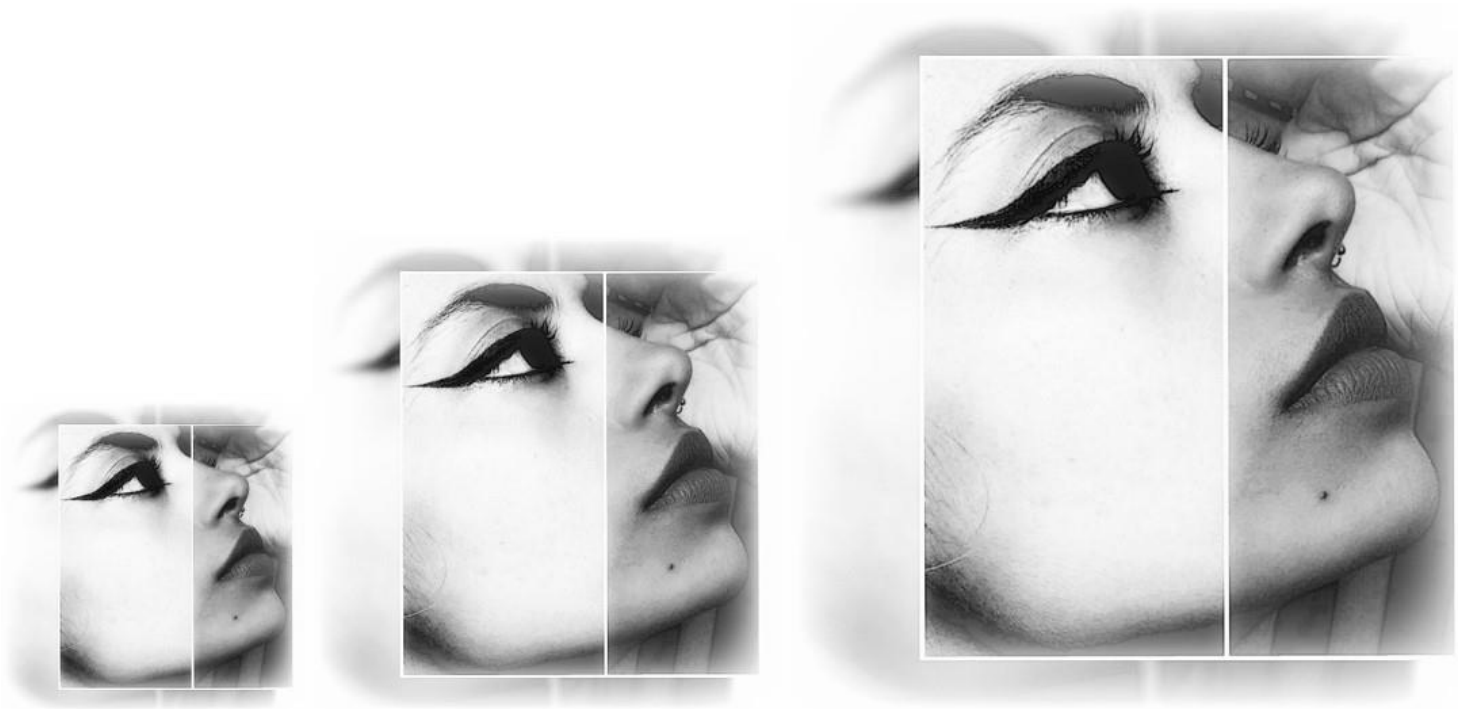
These poems speak from the edge of what should never have been done to a body, to a child, to a soul.

They are written for the unseen.
For the unheard.
For the unborn.
And for the one reading this who has lived through what no one should have to explain.

You do not need to understand every line, just feel the echoes, some could be yours.

This is not literature.
It is evidence.

*Dedicated to all those women who stand up against oppression, violence and exploitation, whose individual and concerted efforts toward freeing the bodies and minds of women and children from the clutches of systematic and systemic abuse, sexualisation, objectification, trafficking, pornography, prostitution and surrogacy form the bedrock of our ethics.*



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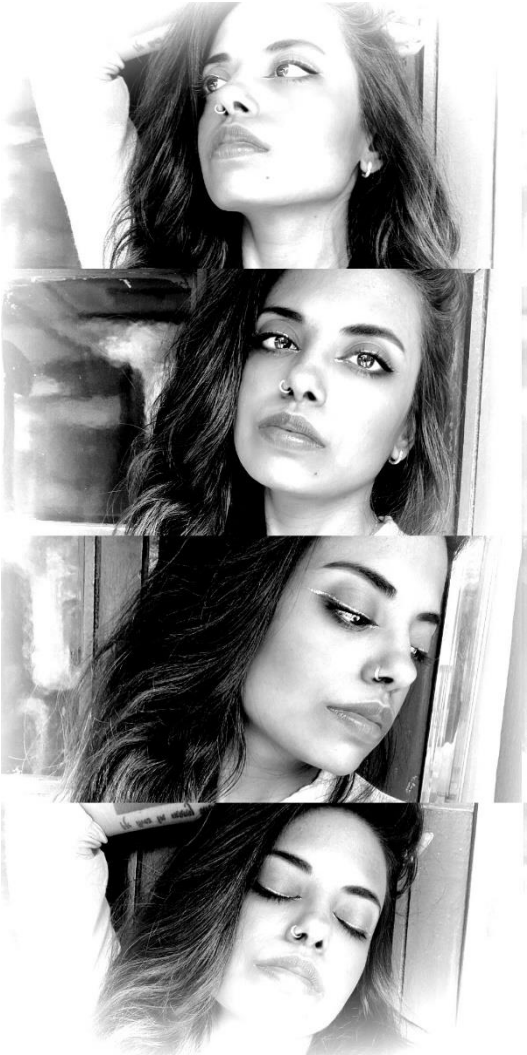

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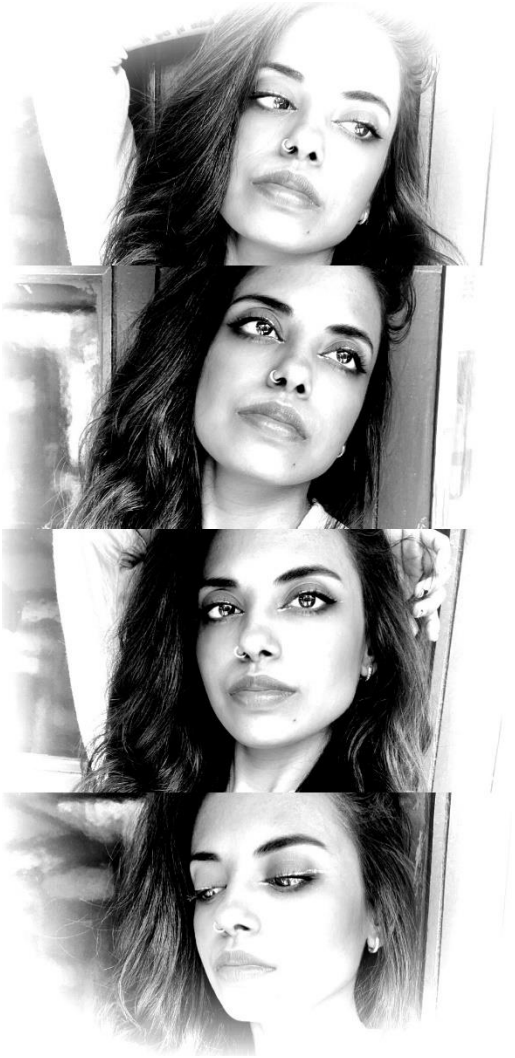
I write from observation — not
indulgence, not flair.
My life is light: living in and watching
the world. Yet the writing is heavy.
Because someone has to see and hold what
hasn't been spoken,
what was buried unspoken,
transfigured,
butchered,
or, worst of all, reified.
I chose to be the one who doesn't look
away.
It not just a telling.
It also witnessing.
And it asks nothing —
but that someone else may pause,
listen,
see,
and maybe — just maybe — carry it
forward.



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*Integrity is the ability to stand by an idea.*

-- Ayn Rand

## Preface

This book was born in the womb of dissent —
an elegy for all that bleeds unseen.

In a world where stories become social scripts,
I sought to write from the edge of the abyss,
to speak of suffering without metaphors.

These are not crafted illusions.
These are splinters — sharp, uninvited,
impossible to forget.

**White November** is not a collection of poems. It
is a record of harm — a body of ethical grief
and spiritual refusal.
Some of these pieces are autobiographical.
Some were witnessed.
Some were inherited through empathy too deep
to escape.
But all of them are true.

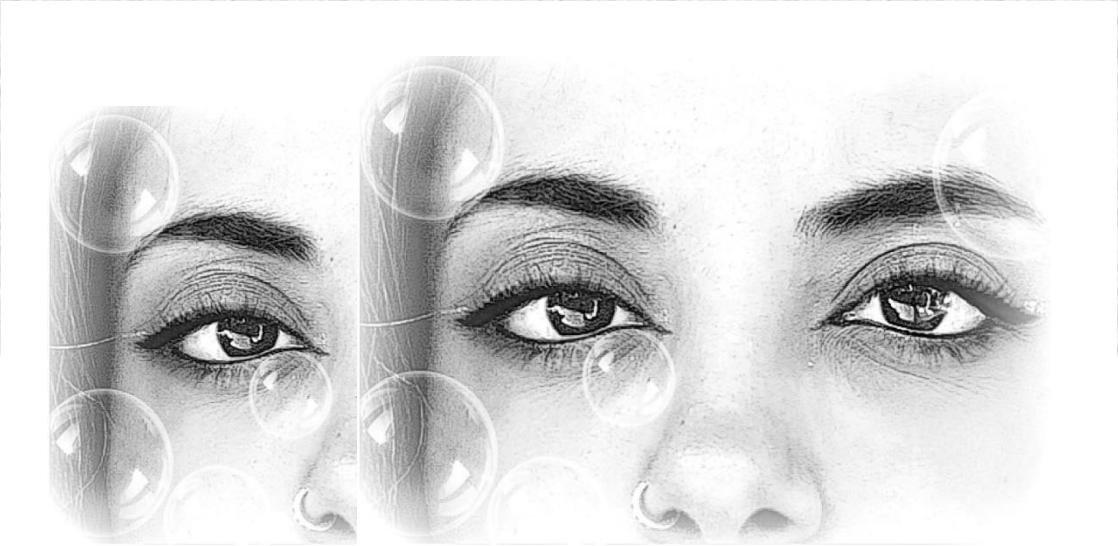
Dedicated to sentience, this book is my apology for existence without consent —
a mirror to our complicity and silence.
Each piece arrives with blood on its hands.

I offer no resolution.
Only witnessing.
Only breath.

May this be the voice of the dead who are still living.
The ones not lucky enough to forget.

Once upon a time ...

# Part 1



# My Hands Are Clean

I see cheap life scattered around,
but the street to my house is neat.
Many, many a childhood sunk deep in ground,
but my youth has gained its feet.
Don't call me a squealer,
nor take me as mean.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.

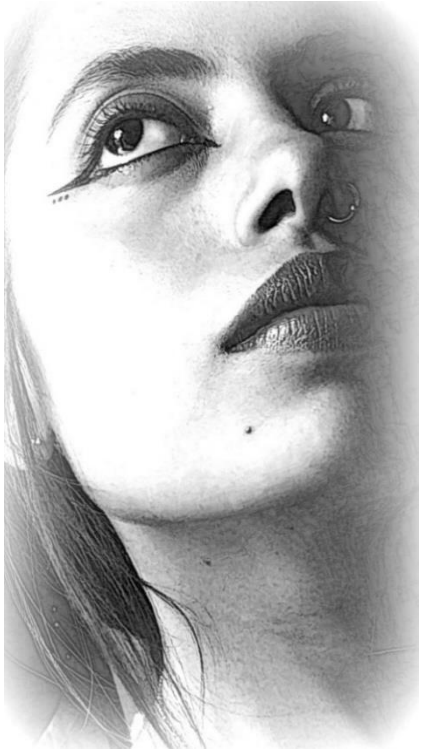
I see fences guarding and men apart,
yet this 'wiser' heart won't grieve.
Many, many a life that failed to start,
but warmongering eyes don't perceive.
Don't call me a sinner,
nor a go-between.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.

I see pilfered bodies raped, gunpoint,
but lust and torture don't deplete.
Many, many a head mauled, unjoint,
still death tastes whole and sweet.
Don't call me a winner,
nor a judge foreseen.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.

I see a few blossoms readying beneath,
but these ruthless hands won't veer.
Many, many a prime turned to wreath,
but my soul stays nice and clear.
Don't call me a dealer,
nor a cad unseen.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.

I see blood on corpses, splashed, to load,
yet this bloated belly won't fill.
Many, many a spine bent and mowed,
but the heart can't feel the chill.
Don't call me a skinner,
nor a man obscene.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.

I see daggers, rifles in orphaned arms
but my conscience still can't feel.
Hatred, vengeance sink, rise in swarms,
yet those wounds will never heal.
Don't call me a stealer,
nor a death machine.
I am but human –
Look, my hands are clean.



# What to Live For

Sometimes,
it is easy to see life from a distance, than eye to eye.
The act offers a not-so-often encountered
mode of inquiry.
You find questions you won't dare ask in broad
daylight,
nor in the stupor-inducing lullabies
of paralysing nights. With no answers, of course.
Only a little more philosophizing.

What if
you have nothing to hold on to
as you find life, threadbare and suspended mid-air,
in an altered reality?

What if
the half-truths, half-lies now peep through the veil,

and find nothing but a collective feeble attempt
at filling in that void?

What if
the mind is tired of the fantasy sold all round,
as it attempts to gather the lost faces in this puppetry
cut to size?

What if
the writing on the wall stares right back at us all
and only you are alive enough to read it through?

What if
you have lived past the great loves on this journey,
requited, conveniently distracting, but short,
and are completely empty now?

And what if

you still found yourself alone in all the years of this existence,
and felt days and years in the slow movement
of the clock?

What if
despite all the hailed joys –
of beauty, of family, of poetry, of gratitude, of grace,
there still is that dull, throbbing, aching pain of
having been lied to?

What if
there's no desire left to pick up the pen again
and write another blank verse that amounts to nothing,
just like life?

What if
you have felt the pain, the angst, the helplessness coursing

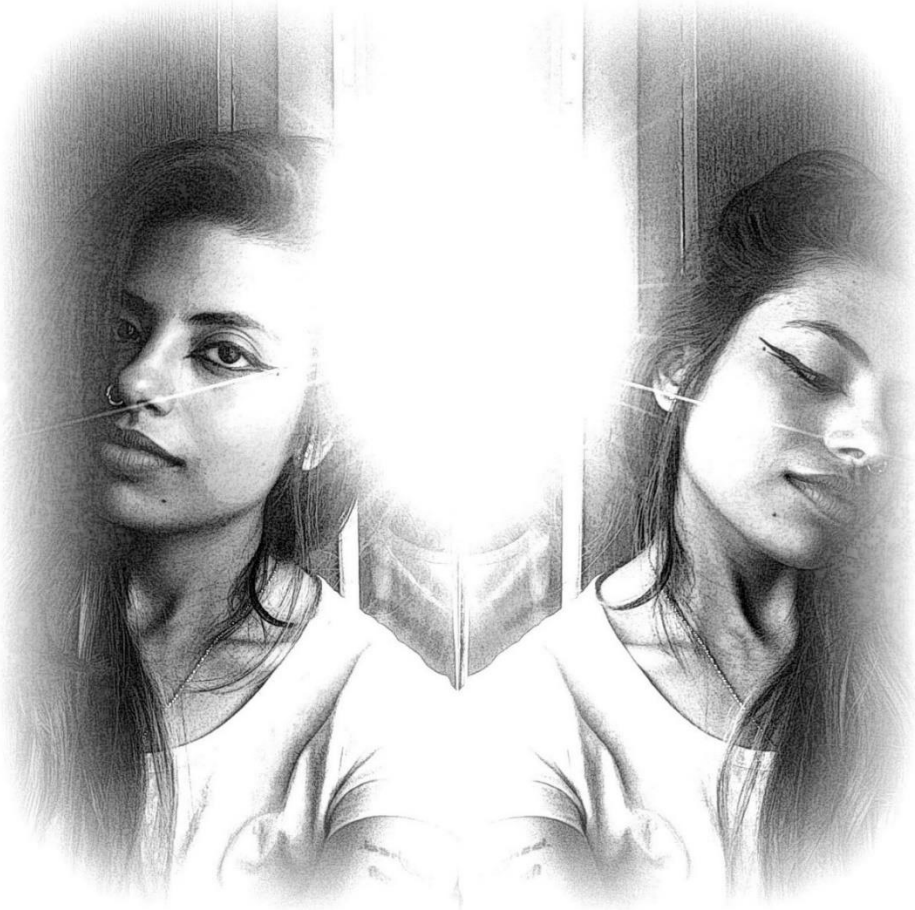
through the blood in your veins
and cannot stop it all from piercing, tormenting, cutting
you back?

What if
there is only one player in this charade,
this game of card where you were pawned,
and you now finally know it is not you?

What if
you still tried to embrace the dark, cold world
with all its tragedies and badges of injustices and shame,
only for it to hurt you back?

And what if
you had lived life once and now wish and pray
to not see yet another day, every night?

What to live for ...



# All I Have Is This Day

Where I sit,
the windows bring in more than sunshine and rain.
Trotting footsteps.
Racket of human noises.
Odors of life and death.
Amidst this,
screams of madness,
riding, then drowning with the gentle gust of all forgotten pasts, vie for one slow moment in the oblivion of my mind.
But all I have to offer, is this day, within.

What may appear cacophonous to the crowd that watches me from below,
is a long-unuttered confession,

filling the deep blue sea of memory,
which like the lines on my face and hands,
has warped and now finds
empty spaces that sometimes echo,
and sometimes say nothing.
It is through this singular beauty,
the asymmetry,
the peace hidden in the chaos within
that I now witness the ecstasy that comes
with sheer living.

I gain a new consciousness.

A suspended eternity awakes inside
and seethes with contempt, with ardour,
to escape, to burn, to seize,
to breathe.
I give it what it wants:

The screams. The madness. The carcass of the pasts.
And she re-lives. An existence bare –
To the point where nullity reinforces and retains
the totality of being.
Where it owns and is owned; fills and is filled.

Now, when the windows are closed,
all noises have stopped themselves from scratching
the thin membrane that is the mask of the alive
and kicking,
and the only voice is that of silence
and the heart, beating,
the inner music asks me again,
if it is time to return, to re-gather the pieces of
my scattered soul.
To retrace those wind-blown footprints.
And as always, all I have is this day,
to begin.

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# Monochrome Realities

Every act of ours,
the loving, the waiting,
indeed the living, craves for a finality.
We pass our days and unending years
sometimes slowly, oftentimes in haste,
to reach there where Time stands still and our
life finds that ever-lasting solace.

In search of that interim immortality,
we fill blank sheets with our questions,
our fears and humiliations,
the unaccepted defeats,
and our colourful, petty successes,
yet nothing really fills the inside.
The gaping hollowness eats up every
sliver of ray we feed into it,
to lighten our darkened souls.

Still.
Tirelessly and nevertheless slogging,
with little blistered feet hurting and yet continuing to run amok,
to finally live someday, we die little by little, every day.
Foolishly, or maybe adamantly,
we go on and on and on ...
pinned to the whims of a blind, alive yet un-feeling meat grinder,
an aberration in the grand scheme of things,
cul-de-sac, as it always was, always will be.
Creating, destroying,
and yet again creating our solitary lives
in these crowded cities that forgot us, forsook us,
even before the sun left the evening sky,
dumping our hoarded thoughts and emotions in a world that is already glutted.

No wonder we are empty and our libraries, too full.
No wonder, respite doesn't come:
this assurance that we had at last lived.
Our certificate of faith, our soul, has yellowed, is in tatters,
and still we dream:
Of a new fabric.
Of absolution,
Of freedom renewed.

So what if the monotony of years eats away the edifices
of these short-lived illusions ...
We, the living,
have and will re-create our own
domination –
the unbroken reverie of an everlasting youth.
We dream.

We ascend.
We fly.
We sing ...
And just as inviolably, the Music fades.
Art finds itself at Death's gates.
Only to meet apathy.

...

I wonder what good is
this quest for an ever-elusive Eternity
as I continue to lose myself in the mist of
unlived seasons of my monochrome realities ...

# Death and Its Funeral

It was the nail in the coffin that reminded me.

There is a very fine line between the Real and
the illusion,
and all our life we are taught to not see it.
Yet, our grandiosity can't always trick.
Something gives in.
Like clay that bends to the will of the potter,
to misfortunes, humiliations, and injustices.

The long parade to the graveyard bears no
affectations.
It is cruel.
Honest.
Unforgiving.

Nevertheless, troubled by the voices of the Dying,
its simplicity attains an ominous silence, almost
material in texture:
One that needs vocal rehearsals.
Again and again.
No wonder, the chaos ensues.
And so, with flowers and reminiscences we try to
comfort the Dead,
who, packed away in tiny boxes like sardines,
with red lips and finery, look funny, almost
indecent, and infinitely sad.
Funerals are pretty.
Deaths, never so.

I wish this struggle between blood and breath were
impartial.
But no, it is indifferent at best.

An uncompromising, unrelenting devil-may-care anomaly. Simply put, a difficult beast.

Every day,
it begs for a reprieve which doesn't come.
Every day,
it tries to outdo itself, yet dismally fails.
And as time passes by,
the hoarseness,
now rattling,
now crying,
soon changes into a plea, where floating on the stone-cold face,
the two sinking eyes at last come alive.
Funerals are quiet.
Death, not always.

Thus caught between the stinking flesh and an

emerging nostalgia,
one attempts casing up this gratuitous parting
with motifs,
with a reluctant remorse for not dying.
I wish I could find it amusing,
this constant desire to feel important as the Dying
consign us to a merciful oblivion.
Yet I cannot.
The Dead continue on their journey,
and the Living are left behind,
with the comfortable practicality of harmless lying.
Funerals are deceptive.
Deaths, never so.

It was the nail in the coffin that reminded me.

Death is a beautiful thing in itself.
And its pretense, a work of art.

# Words

Words have the power to intrigue.
Words have the power to deceive.

Few things have ever held me captive,
and none as strongly as my self-created
ghosts.
Sometimes I feel they and I are not separate:
the same blood that flows within me
traverses their dead vein, too –
reinforcing,
resurrecting,
the shadows of my poesy.
A requiem for those words.

It is strange when I look at them now

through the distance of time and space.
They seem not to have aged.
If anything,
we have only grown younger, my ghosts and
I.

In a way, I am like the earth I live upon.
Everything finally returns into me –
the sacred dust of oblivion.

Someone once said:
What do we ever do in life except to love?
He was right.
To have loved - nothing more, nothing less.
He left without saying much,
yet I can still feel the echo of those words.

It was a well-intentioned thought.
Only it hurts even today.

I think we now know better.
Nothing ever fills.

Except maybe words.

I wish there were a hole I could
disappear into,
a yawning abyss where the world
would cease to exist.

The walk has been long,
hopeless, cruel, insignificant.
The quiet serenity
that had once dwelled among barren pages is
now ash:

its memory stained.
The still waters reflect the customary tedium
on scattered suns of a palpable doom.
A sense of overwhelming relief
is what I await.
Illusionary flights can no more satisfy
the real windows of the mind that never
open.
Something has to give.

Paralyzed between the four walls,
the street begs, if only, for a pale sun,
like a constant gardener, for that delicate
hope for her fruit tree,
desolate, broken, dying,
And there, lying half asleep,
half-awake, I dream of the river.
Of her dense, humid darkness,
which like the umbilicus, had kept me alive.

But even that womb doesn't comfort today.
In the precise chronicle of a privileged
oblivion,
the last dawn is rising up,
to forever sleep,
while I lie exposed on the naked rock:
even the shifting grains of sand have
forgotten me.

Still, a peculiar bitterness remembers
who I was
one that swelled from me,
from that familiar disdain for all things
human.

Can I escape from it? From myself?
Of course not.

But I must confess:
With the river now gone, and the abyss, shrunk,
not much remains to hold on to –
inside, outside.
Only this thought sustains as dear as life.
The monologue of the soliloquist.

The inner space of abstraction can only grow so
much,
after which a terrible restlessness begins to
infect  the earth, the vacuity, the myths within:
nothing is left sane.
From such invisible chaos,
I gaze up and the harsh horizon
suddenly seems gentle.
Almost kind. Like a whirlwind.

Maybe it will have me.

# Remnant

What do they matter,
the innocent hum of obscenities,
the deprivation,
the exile to which the soul has been banished ...
What is the thought's monotony to me
when the indecisiveness of an enduring emotion
stagnates the perpetuity with which the river flows
...
What is the moral of any narrative
when generations of helpless, innocent souls
have been slain by a fictitious yet ghastly brutal
god ...
Not much remains sacred, unscathed, whole in the
world
when the merciful glory,

which once was unrelenting in its act of worship,
abandons its virtue and shrivels the very rose it revers.

The feet tread on my undying ghosts.
A certain singular joy it must be to jeer at one's own death.
There is nothing as intimate as the touch of the knife
trapped inside the silvery edge.
I have the time to look back: to reflect, to ponder, to live,
for who can escape the soft whispering of the night ...
The wind, laden with the ash of my many existences, is blowing away from its home,

gently erasing the destiny of my eternal face,
unknown to me.
Yes, only the knife is faithful.
In the semi-darkness of my obscure
contemplation,
it compensates the want of human touch.
I ask for no more.

There is only an uncertain 'hope' of an equally
deceiving portent
by which swathes of bodies,
past, present, future, hang in mid-air
to be touched, blessed, sacrificed and saved by the
omnipresent,
omniscient hand of reckless, unforgiveable,
inescapable sadism.
That torture being the pleasure of the masochist ...

Long last, the mirror bores into the flesh and delivers me,
out of the madness, the Hell of divine intervention.
The delicate tracery leaves no discernible, living mark,
only a half-written remnant of the monologue,
searching for the unborn shadows
on the vastness of the recently blue-washed wall.

# Derelict Hearts, Derelict Places

With borrowed breaths from a turquoise twilight,
I was waiting for a final tale to be spun,
a deep wound that could be etched permanently
onto the metalwork of Time's armour, and finally
be called my own.
A lone star, you could say,
that were to become my one feeble but honest light.
Guaranteed,
I didn't have much to hope for, but still, I was
here, demanding to resurrect, yes,
from the depths of the ocean,
a landscape of memories,
those departed days of tranquillity that once
belonged to me:
the tale of derelict hearts and derelict places.

Expectantly, as I stood unmoving,

for something to leap out from the dark soul of
the blue
and hand me back some consolation,
a sky of rum pierced through,
audaciously apparent in its uniquely vile
pleasure
to re-awaken the torture that was its thirst.
It could know no moderation, no reprieve.
Guileless in act and form.
Bold, defiant, and ready to subdue.
At the far end of the rainbow,
this nemesis was my pot of gold, to which I had
come,
gradually,
travelling a million miles of illusions and haze,
off the tight hook of that stolen plum,
of that unquenched yearning for a few drops of
grace.

Today, before it, I was no more defenceless,
like cattle struggling to cope with the torrent,
the onslaught, tied stiff to the noose.
Its tenacity was commendable to me now,
as a spectator,
not when I was not – trying to break free of
those convoluted trappings
that had cut me deep, only to cut me loose.
No, it was not a mockery,
this grand parade of my past erring and
moments of falling.
It was my hard-won victory, to derelict
hearts, to derelict places.

To say I was fully aware of the transgression
would be a half-truth.
Such crossing-over is not marked with signs
or barbs,

a mere wandering into the dry hinterlands
on a usual yet inordinately dry desert day,
looking for elixir, for water, for shade.
The known.
The mundane. The way to blue.
But when yellowed sands greeted me in this new
territory,
as far as the eye could see,
I knew I had arrived on the other shore,
where accumulated silt, after years of inactivity,
was shifting about in a familiar restlessness,
one I had lived through many a night of fettered
dilemmas and lies.

They were all there, and ever more,
conjuring up slivers of prior existences in bubbles
of grit and foam:
the delirium, the mirage, the parched throat, the

cracked skin ...
But like a lasting spring, only one that tears open the earth,
to never stitch itself back, un-healed yet ultimately whole,
I was glad to be found in this last vestige of home,
in derelict hearts and derelict places ....

Only a vagrant knows the price of her rootlessness,
of relinquishing the safety of the accepted for the trials of the outcast, the unknown.
Feet that have suffered no bruises or blisters can never really earn this keepsake,
the reminder of a journey, a destination which got swallowed up  in the dust and wind.
Captured, broken, blown.
No, it is an exclusive, unadulterated joy,
of un-belonging,

paralleled only by the great abandon that trails it
when released from the promise of an imagined
Land
among wilted roses of wilted dreams.
That waiting, that redemption, had become the
ouroborus, the burning god,
eating away the faint traces left of my mirrored
life.

I know now, with a certainty which is reached
only with losing and winning:
that despite the scorched lines that run criss-cross
on the barren field where no innocence can grow,
indeed dew of grace they were,
those derelict hearts, those derelict places.

# Waste

Only a trace of stale air fills the room.
The last cigarette is gone,
and a singular shadow
is slowly creeping to the top of the silent wall.
The deserted ashtray sits patiently on the table.
Like life, it too has learnt to remain empty.
For nothing really fills: And I truly believe in this.

The days were made to be wasted:
in search of fake loves and broken hopes.
To be murdered in the dark alley,
as I spent away, quietly, hopelessly, aching to be seen,
to be spoken to,
to be touched.

These years and loves were meant to be wasted.

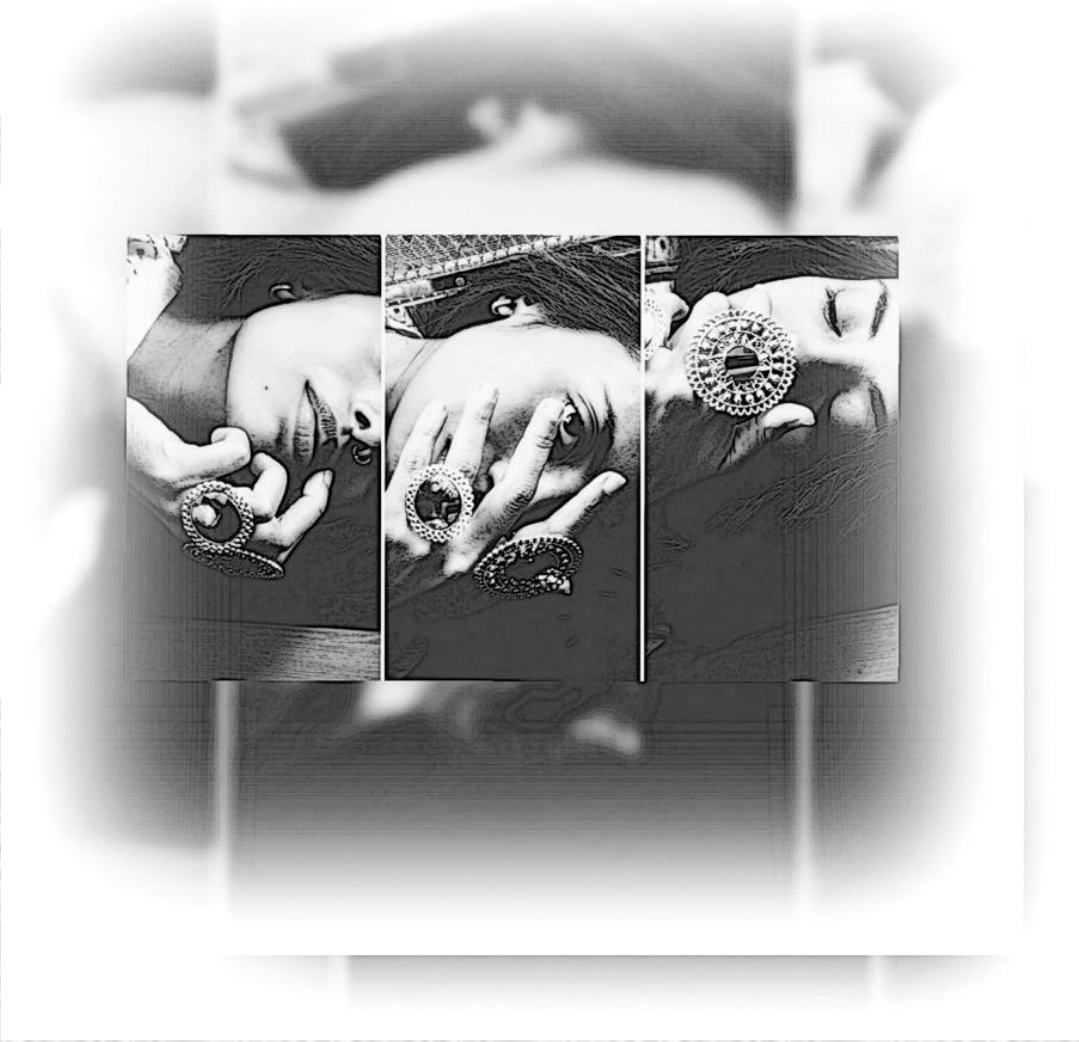
Sleep and indifference seem to be our only
possibilities.
It is better to burn out like the cigarette,
listening to the waves as they embrace
the stillness of the wind,
rather than wait, like a fag end, in a night
full of little stories,
for a morning to come.

From experience of wilted years,
I can attest that such a morning never arrives.
That perfect,
eternal,
transcendental moment eludes us all.
You and I only chase clouds,

fluffy,
pink,
youthful,
like precious, tempting childhood cotton
candy, like mulberry.
Only sweetness is not the aftertaste that
lingers.
Just a strange desire to see beyond the obvious.
If only it were that easy!

Burn, burn away into sparkling embers
that disappear into the Great Nothing
with the grey wisps of smoke.
Smell of nicotine is still more human
than the odor of corrupted, necrotic, dead
meatsuit.
That decay is the finality that awaits us all,
not the morning we were sold.

The top of the wall is now possessed.
There isn't a lot left, neither in the world, nor in me.
Ambition, meaning, purpose, everything has faded;
no faux pas to hide.
Let all fall apart, slip ...
I have died too many deaths –
don't ask me to live:
I can only laugh,
so that the end won't be as sad as the nights
that ceased to dream, to breathe, to be.



# Nothingness

In the dark,
secret corners of our minds.
something keeps dragging while we bury our little
soul in bitter escapes,
in wasted hours,
in delirious illusions of eternal happiness,
in a senseless, futile search
for meaning.

That carcass is what we worldly people call
"waiting".
As we wait for life to find some order.
As we wait for death to lose its track.
To forget us and let be.
As we wait for that deliverance which never was to
come.

As we wait for that "waiting", which was never
begun to so end.

That carcass is what we worldly people carry,
through the morass of sticky, putrid years.
As we do our collective and individual guilt.
Our lies and deceit, for the lowest of means.
Our complaints and bigotry.
Our hate and prejudices, our guile and immorality.
Posterity and humanity .....

In all my years of this earthly existence,
I have lived the life of an alien.
Aware and still woefully unprepared.
Rooted in this solitary bedrock of shared, mutated
animalist horrors, and yet so drastically separated.
Struggling with everyday punishments,
corporeal, civilizational, existential,

I still do not, and never will, understand
how this travesty is celebrated, desired, even mandated ...
That this prison of flesh, this unthinking encode,
with its frailties and fragilities, its hunger and barbarities,
in a universe so indifferent it seems ominous and outright evil,
is not dreaded, despised, banished ...

Those dark, secret corners finally know,
after years of patient forbearance,
that the carcass is nothing. That we all are but Nothing.
And yet, as willing puppets happily dancing beneath the fingers of the blind watchmaker in the most absurd clownery,
we drag this horrendous dichotomy of pleasure and pain infinitely, viciously, appallingly for an equally macabre legacy ...

# Nothing Lasts Forever

They say nothing lasts forever.
Then what is it that I hold inside?
Through innocent mistakes
to adolescent days,
in the silence of the wind upon the sea's pristine gaze,
I have lived them all,
these many unforgettable suns
in the birth of the sky,
in the death of my moon ...

They say nothing lasts forever.
Then what is this that I dream inside?
Beneath dust-filled lines
and my naked wounds,
in trickling hours upon Time's untroubled soul,

a passing beauty to grace my scared outside:
To once more breathe.
To once more fulfil ...

They say nothing lasts forever.
Then what is this that I live inside?
From nostalgic arms to
beloved names
in the loneliness of the street until the night's
unfinished games.
I have played them all,
these many unknowable worlds
in the cold of the grave,
in the warmth of my sleep ...

---

The universe has shrunk into a quivering bead of dew,

and all I can hold is the immensity
that one utterance of the Eternal has spread
anew.
My voice has merged with the speaking shadows
from the Past:
I am finally empty to forever and forever last.

They say nothing lasts forever.

# Extended Suicide

Sometimes
you just have to face the mirror
that hangs on the wall.
Forgotten, forgiven, for all the sins
that the poor soul could claim,
in that mirror
you sometimes try to trace back
a childhood dream that the waning youth
tried hard to save.

You put on an act,
you try to plaster a smile,
on a time-eaten face that the soul forgot
to hide.
The circus begins as the circus ends,
and between these dark,

savage fits of the vicious daylight,
you die each day,
to live through just another night.

What more does one need
when loneliness fills every hole, every void,
in a world that boasts of fickle loves
that fill the heart
with immortal sunshine ...

Don't you smell the rotting flesh, this abomination,
as it parades itself before eyes unkind,
in a bid to earn one petty glance
that will turn all miseries, sublime?
And yet you ask me,
why I live the way I write –
Dead by the day, deader by the night?

Don't you see –
all this striving, this begging
for a few more breaths of this glorious life
is nothing more than a handful of living throes
on the deathbed of my
extended suicide.

Sometimes
you just have to face the mirror
that hangs, fittingly, upside down
on the broken charade that is the wall.

# Conditioned

An irrevocable act has been committed:
A face has been added to the multitude.
And now History will never be the same again.

The face will go on to live in mirrors of its own fates,
conquering one wave of ambition and then another,
just like those insatiable hands that try hard to find
some gratification in the desolation of their self-created ghettos,
but meet only the opacity of their sunless reflections.
Scratching the wall, to create a hole, a window, a door ...

To flame the fire that seethes and scorches
within,
a hidden revenge will then rise up to breathe,
and in such blind echoes of unraveled hate,
its translucent silences will begin to speak.
The earth will be bared:
Her modesty, stripped,
to cover up the obscene starkness of faceless
dreams.

And just when you will think
that the End is nigh,
two infinitesimal, bored, almost-animal eyes
will leap out in a rush to breed:
Skeletons will blow up.
Perpetuity will screech.

And among shadows of fears
and metaphors and myths,
venerated monuments of a disgraced past will
begin to kneel.

History will never be the same again:
The face will live –
In cramped illusions of infinitude,
escaping, like a mind-prisoner, from one
memory of consciousness
toward another.
Just like those maddened hours
that burn themselves away to rewrite what has
been already written,
only to find the blankness of the shroud
staring back at them.

There is just one way it ends:

Today, tomorrow, or decades ahead.
A Nothingness that Nothingness begets.
But hollowed, drugged minds cannot accept the bitter pill.
Conditioned, we magnify ourselves to escape the quicksand.
Anything is better than the brutality, the reality of the Great Leveller that awaits.

So with meanings, delusions, lofty ideals and muddied snatches of Time,
we failingly try to save us, desperately, from the psychosis we self-build,
for ourselves, for posterity, to repeat ad infinitum.
I wonder if we are worth it.
Meanwhile, the face will live to add another to the kiln.

# The Epitaph

People fear the white marble in general.
Rarely, if ever, it is brought alive in conversations,
and yet many a quiet evening is spent by the soft fire,
thinking, dreaming about the words which will eventually grace it.

Each man wants a piece of Eternity.
I too once wished such a verse:
To sublimate in the plaque's waxen invulnerability,
like syllables caught in endless echoes of a throbbing Infinity.
But this enduring romance has, with time, faded.

Today, I stand alone,
with the good, clean dust of certainty.
Poetry too has flown past me.
It had been the only fixture,
the only witness to my many smaller lives:
From tiny first steps
to gigantic stretches of a crude artifice,
it had watched me silently evolve into a
willed caricature,
like the finest work of art.
Her virginal waters, which once bore me,
have now left my shores.
I have finally stopped: never to begin again.

At such a stage when disenchantment becomes
a new passion,
that engraving on the marble should

become material,
assuming immense dimensions through a wise triviality,
yet I am untouched.
The essential remains the same.
But it is better to forget it as we approach our warped divinity.
As others busy themselves in mouthing hasty words from their deathbeds,
I ponder over the utility of this unique human immortality.

This constancy is merciful.
It takes the pain out of unjust leave-takings,
and brings unearned recognition.
Of belonging.
Of becoming.

The evanescent absurdity of being human.
Is it not enough?
Who craves oblivion when a sweet sorrow can
be tasted
in the tears of loved ones ...
Beyond space and time.

Memories and reminiscences, though heavy,
still seem rich:
the calm that comes with being forgotten is
unbearably light.
And yet, that is all I want –
The emptiness,
the journey and metamorphosis into a
parallel universe
where poesy loses its meanings and the soul is
at last free:
From the debt of life once handed over

as a token of love and union, without
consent.
Free indeed from the curse of living and lying.

I have no desire to dye my death
in the splendor of the world's intricate,
petty,
insignificant
and ultimately futile dreams.
I will keep it bare:

An honest grave is the most befitting,
consequential rarity.
I will leave nothing behind.

# Paranoia

I have no explanation for this detachment.
To suffice, let us say, I am unambitious.
I was born without desires.
But this material world always leaves scars.
And its pathologies.
After decades of wakefulness, I have developed
a desire. It is like reflex.
I crave for sleep.

Among white walls,
with the sunlight filtering in.
Not the sleep of the harried, but one whose journey,
and the accompanying convictions, is at its end.

I want to disappear
into that state of precious, bittersweet inactivity.

The sounds,
the colours,
the rush stifle me.
I want to breathe. Is this not why I became the Desert?

Of everything that language has to offer,
I take only that which can never be offered:
this metaphor for Nothingness.
I am in love with relics, and ruins.
Why?
For they uphold the only truths - constancy and change. Like the River.

That is all I have ever wanted:
to walk in such a place with you,
on an earth as honest as death in a moment
as pure as poetry.

Yes. I have only lived to love - the Desert, the River,
and my beloved ghosts.
Only He doesn't exist.

The faceless window gazes in.
Displaced,
I stand unsteadily among
contradictions and illusions of an
unfenced country.
Between civilization and the Ancient order.
At the very edge of the abyss –
where even depth loses consciousness.

From such a window,
I see rising the trappings of a never-ending
odyssey:
within to without.
One man's search for a personal history.

An impossible beauty it is,
the indecipherable code of the Desert,
where afloat smoldering clouds the great tangible melts
into the Mythical,
as the naked rock breathes out
a fiery imagination,
a strange air,
pure, hard, fearless.

I dream of such a state of distilled silence
that breeds a raw madness,
far out, on the verge of things,
to bore into the very heart of the stone
and choke it – to speak.

An ever-altering perspective is what It offers
one that simply exists: like a mysterious promise.
Ever far, and ever near.

The insanity of its being knows no mercy.
Quietly as an assassin, it creeps in,
filling the embrace of an intimate
Loneliness with unrequited, excessive, almost inhuman
love.
Through it, I have come to worship what is spare, rough,
wild. Unbroken, untouched.

Where splendor finally assumes
the rich singularity of the vast Nothing,
and where precious tenderness suffuses thirst
with a kind acerbity,
the unspeaking paranoia closes in.

A constant flux reduces all sophistries and meanings
to an overintricate sublimity.
The Exile rises, a little too early, a little too late,
and again, the faceless window gazes in.

# Surrender

I belong to an earth I have never seen.
An earth where there are no dams, no roads,
no chains that come with inhaling and
exhaling.
Only the air reminds you of existence as it
carries away with it
the fragrance of the burning juniper.
The face of the sky changes and the day fades
into the evening.

I belong to a man I have never lived.
A man in whose breaths I melt as invisible
hands explore the depths
which lie concealed in that curve where two lips
meet.

What sea of sadness two eyes can hold!
Raw touch unravels the history of every engraving,
every written word on my naked body, and I am cut open by a phantom
I barely know.

I belong to a death I have never felt.
A death that doesn't die when tears cease to well up
in the eyes of those who are left behind –
without memories, without proprieties,
without the embarrassment inherent in that mourning by the civilized.

This is the only living, the only eternity possible to me.
The story of an Artist.

To the questing,
to the lost,
beyond the scared wall of the unreal city,
beyond stifling fortifications
of the mutilated river,
a vast desolation of nothingness is the only
home.

Devoid of all leitmotifs of
human existence,
away from the asphalt of hatred and greed,
an uncharacteristically familiar boldness
suffuses the barren terrain as old and lonesome
as eternity.

Nothing can desecrate –
not the barbed wires, not the lies, nor the deceit:

an ancient holiness bestrides the scorching sky.

The stillness of the dry,
thirsty air impresses its claws into a deepness
unbeknown to the dark skin;
it becomes a substance,
a thing,
a medium for the silence
to become real,
overdramatic,
contrived, like a theatrical setting.

This another world is faithful
to herself, to all.

She never disappoints.
There is a cruel honesty in her senescence,
there is a rare wisdom in her youth.

She has no need for adornments: her dawn is
golden,
her dusk, auburn in all majestic hues.

In this limbo of creation, where every superfluity
has been
shed, foetal dreams of a perennial
gratification
smoothen the serrated edge
of the heavy moon.

And while the relentlessness of obsessive
repetitions
tires a half-consumed soul, she feeds, fulfills,
one's most intimate needs:
of solitude,
of happiness,
of the long night of sleep.

As our microcosms of
infantile, pathological desires crumble into a
heap of sand:
as we go on living
repeating ourselves with
minor variations, she alone remains –
constant,
unchanging,
infinite,
in her innumerable transitions,
from the Beyond, to the Beyond.

In an inverse relation with
the Outside,
she and I share an almost ascetic intimacy,
an unconscious synchronicity:
untouched, unscathed by the paring
confines of space and time.

And as a raw, life-affirming bloom
resurrects the relics of sand and dust,
a delicate simplicity pervades the horizon of my
purple sky.

She understands me.
She comforts me.

When the excessiveness becomes unendurable,
she tucks me away from the
narcissist void,
into the heart of the petroglyph,
where cryptic symbols hide a beauty bare.
And there,
in the inertia of a seductive materiality,
the Primeval code reveals itself:

I become the Desert.

# Journey

Each one of us has inroads to nowhere.
Walking forward and backward
simultaneously,
we travel on the same path meeting the same
kind,
again and again.
Nietzsche called it the eternal recurrence. And
he was right.
Denial is very easy.
But I have the tendency to test every
metaphysical premise.
And what better way than nostalgia.

Unknowingly, through the written word, I
provoke my ghosts
to manifest,

who like an unsparing memory,
gnaw at my very roots.
And travelling in their innumerable dimensions,
I face a strangeness, a transgression
familiar yet ever new.
Through endless cycles of never-exhausting existences,
somehow, incidents, experiences, people begin to repeat,
ad nauseam.
Begin to reek.
But I can only gather fragrance.

Then why this discomforting contemplation?

Because of Youth.

A most profound beauty,
it gratifies us with the gift of forgetting.
Only I am not young, never was.
What came easily most, was unachievable for me.

And so, with the night that safely embraces the tenderness,
the warmth which emanates from the most intimate kiss,
I saved it all inside me –
the nostalgia of a much-coveted oblivion.

And it is through these insignificant journeys
that I have arrived at the Significant –
alive in a microcosm where memories are forbidden to breed,

where pasts and presents
are separate,
incohesive remembrances,
each having forgotten the other;
where futures will never be lived,
jilted and stranded in never-to-be-found
islands of obscurity, enigma and the human capacity
to hope ...

# River and I

As I stood silently laughing, on the
last point of this earth,
the River,
patient as the ascetic for my return,
spread open her wings.

It must have noted the ring of an
everlasting freedom
in my voice,
for its acceptance of me was
strangely welcome,
strangely known.
The moment of this finality felt liquid,
solemn like death and yet as
intriguing as life.

In the far distance,
where the discarded vestiges of my
old, tattered self were slowly rotting away,
the purity of her waters was busy
absolving.

Intermixing with the gaiety of the laugh,
which once captured by the roaring wind,
was now wildly floating on vagrant waves,
she was assuming
myriad forms and shapes:
Sometimes a howling banshee,
sometimes just the softest gaze.

Then suddenly she would contort herself,
and before I could extend my hand
to touch it,
in the blink of an eye, she would be gone,

only to emerge yet again,
a whirlpool of the tiniest waves,
frolicking with gay abandon at my feet.
Teasing me, testing me –
Would I now bend down and gather her in my palms?

She knew I was completely happy.
I could sense that in her whispers as she brushed past my left ear,
this time as a serenading flute.

Yes, she was fully absorbed in me,
dancing,
celebrating,
Living ...

Like a spectator, quiet but very privileged,
I graciously watched her and her very many antics:
the aura of her expressions,
the blood-red flush on her face,
the rhythm of her two feet filling the sky for eternity.
There was a singular joy in her ecstasy,
almost mirroring the sensitive condition of my heart.

Everything was enveloped by the mist of our shared, virginal tears:
the whiteness of the water,
the piercing odor of the wet earth below,
a poker-faced horizon holding the last remnants of its dying sun,

the subliminal night that was to soon descend,
among a few lonesome stars,
on its quivering moon.
Just the thing she was capable of:
redeeming herself in her every next wave,
toward a different land,
toward an
uncharted,
unknown, unexpected turn.

The last point, no longer visible to us, had shriveled up.
Gone. Erased. Vanquished.

We had been gulped in by the vacuum,
down through the meandering throat
into the belly of this underworld,
where light,
the most austere light surrounded us
on all sides.
Immanent in this cavern was the silence
of the laughter,
and a long-coveted, primitive, unending
peace.

The River and I were one now.

Melted. Happy. Alive. Anew.

# Violence

Why the hatred, men?

All this blood flowing,
from kitchen sinks, bathtubs,
hollow of her eyes,
from strangled words onto your hands
as this wet floor dries.
Can you feel it shrieking,
out of lungs long collapsed?
Breathing?
Flinching?
Sinking?
And pleading, pleading, pleading .....

The blood in her eyes, sighs, skies.

---

Not only these silent home walls
but in the deafening dark of your unknown lanes,
shrapnel pierce the existence, the names,
sometimes as acid,
sometimes as rain,
incessant, un-giving, monstrous,
and vain.
But you don't stop.
You don't stop.
You cut open wounds barely closed.
Her gut tumbles out, helpless,
exposed.
Safe? But where?
At home? School? Or Work?
From behind screens, in the Deep End,
darker things lurk ...
For flesh to be seen, smelled, and grabbed,

ground, kinked, forked, and gagged,
infinite hands baiting, baiting ...
Tongues and eyes, waiting, waiting.
Do you hear the fingernails scratching,
scratching the door?
The butchering minds of family, friend, foe ...
There is no place, no place she can go.

Accused.
How she walks wrong,
speaks wrong, wears wrong,
hell, every time she breathes,
she breathes wrong!
Strange, she birthed the world yet
she ain't strong?
Good for nothing raises men, but fails lifelong!
So stuff. Pump. Just ram and ram!
Do her in. Slam. Slam.

Trivial?
Not yet.
Then try your slurs once more!
One, two, three and four ....
You think feminized, but not on will?
Wait, wait, let the insult graph build ...
How civilized! Now that's a thrill!
C'mon now, don't be so shrill!
Boys being boys! Innocent drill!

On and on, justified,
after all 'fun' is prime!
Groomed. Degraded. Mortified.
Little girls. Two to five.
Sexualized.
Objectified.
Nine and ten. Pornified.

From shoulders, armpits, waist,
to nipples, legs, and thighs.
What age? Consent? You silly thing!
Shush, shush! Let the 'little man' sing ...

Long last sure comes the 'prize' ...
she learns fast she has to hide:
From streets at night, 'coz you can see.
Her talents' might, 'coz you can see.
Hopes it mars, 'coz you can see.
Emotions, scars, 'coz you can see.
Need and want, 'coz you can see.
Her shadow gaunt, 'coz you can see.
Blood on sheets, 'coz you can see.
And fear that eats, 'coz you can see.
But 'can' you see?

---

Untouched. Shamed. Touched. Blamed.
Unmarried. Shamed. Broken. Blamed.
Childfree. Shamed. Childless. Blamed.
Homemaker. Shamed. Ambitious. Blamed.
Quiet. Shamed. Vocal. Blamed.
Homely. Shamed. Appealing. Blamed.
Abandoned. Shamed. Divorced. Blamed.
Re-married. Shamed. Widowed. Blamed.
Dead … the woman reclaimed!

---

That strings are reined by powerful males
yet she is shamed …
That men are milked and killed by other men,
but she is blamed …
Women, children, everywhere, yet she more shamed …

Devoured. Trafficked. Prostituted. Sold.
Blamed and blamed ...
Raped. Battered. Burnt. Left in cold.
Damned and shamed ...
The list ain't slim. The list ain't slim.
Priests and uncles, rich and high,
from poor Joe to the family guy ...
Virgin spring dumped into gloom.
Heart is tired. Night is doomed.
Little girls yet to bloom, yet to bloom.

To beg for justice, one's basic right!
At homes, in courts, no end in sight ...
Why the hatred, men?
Why?
But why?

You parade us as mothers, sisters, daughters, wives,

yet criminally increase our daily plight.
Feminazis for dignity,
opportunity,
safety to thrive ...
How proudly you Protectors eclipse the light!
Scared of the granter, the flourish of life,
you throttle her in the womb before it's time.
You rape her, degrade her, fists clenched tight.
And if something remains,
you stab her, delete her, in your gory delight.

Shame.

The toxic, sadistic thorn of masculinity.
The brutal farce, the ugly mark of virility.

---

Hurt. Hurt. Hurt.
By silence, when words were needed.
By hate, when love was needed.
By inaction, when support was needed.
By neglect, when care was needed.
By insecurity, when pride was needed.
By control, when nurture was needed.
By fraud, when faith was needed.
By distance, when talk was needed.
By indifference, when concern was needed.
By absence, when presence was needed.
By hands, when heart was needed.
By impotency, when strength was needed.
By rods, when rights were needed ...
By the bestial, when humane was needed.
---
"The grand erectile conquest of a castrated, libidinous machismo.
The unimpeachable alabaster dais of male privilege!"

THE END.

---

In the name of wars, or honour, or game,
the sickness of desire, of patriarchy and fame,
from lips that you cracked,
trust that you smacked,
jaw that you broke,
in sheer disgust of vaginas you tore,
red blood gushing, red blood crushing inhumanity
of yore.
This grotesquery of sexuality, no more, no more ...
Slit, tortured throats. Un-slit, tortured throats.
Red, oh red! Pity, you can't see what holds.

Radicalized, it rises, it floats.
From each dead drop it quotes and quotes ...

# Mirrors

The crowd, with its million eyes
and a thousand tongues;
the void, with its incessant gnawing
and ever-strong clutch;
the Self, with reflections and tombstones
of an unlived life.

You run, run and run to forget, to efface, to die –
among abuses, scandals, tactics
and accusations –
but there are places where one can never hide.

They all exist in that single room
where the walls arise
from false shadows of impenetrable mirrors,
where the ceiling shrinks
into a globe of an illusory ripple

that sends you back and forth among
bottomless memories of the spectral past.

You try to stop it, confront it.. Twisting,
curving, as it gains speed,
suffocating the dying moon
as it wades through
silver evenings of the forgotten future,
but every effort is a waste:
That room is full of ghosts of inverted mirrors.

Maybe if only you stay silent,
still ...
If every thought is dissected, emptied, killed...
Maybe if only you can be unborn?
Yes, then they may stop:

the walls that suddenly, unashamedly close;
the helplessness that cripples
as you stand at the precipice
and a vertigo fills in.

I however have no hope:
the long hands of these unspeaking,
Shining echoes are creeping into my hollowed
mind.

Relentless, ruthless.
They eat away, they multiply:
and when I try to run,
my feet dissolve in
the glaze of the breathing mirrors.

I try to gouge out my eyes so I won't
see them laugh at my feetless frame.

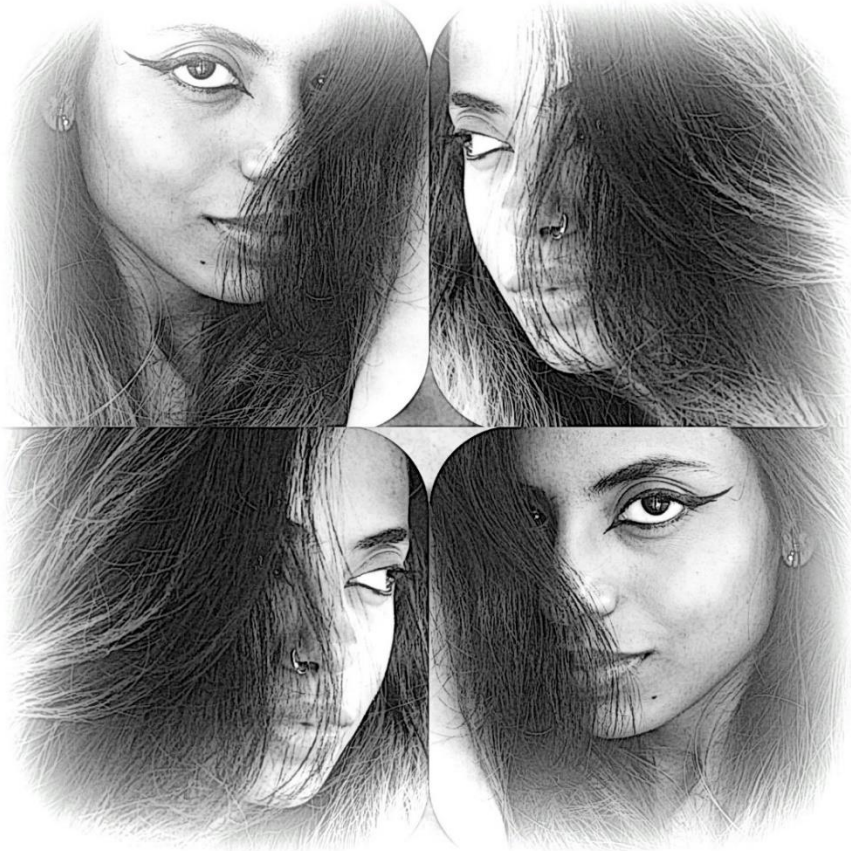
But it is not enough:
they enter into my eyes.
And there I see the naked dance of barbarous
puppets
hung from a mirrored Time.

And this goes on, and on, and on:
down the spiral.
From one mirror to another,
as I try to remember
the face that eyeballs me from the opposite wall.

It must be our one lasting penance,
the only way to Grace,
to freedom –
to be ensconced in the ruminating prism
of our self-created mirrors.

I am not alone.
You are not alone.
They watch us, every day
as the clock treads the same circle, again, again.

There are no places where one can hide:
From the crowd.
From the void.
From the Self – all alone.



# Carcass

We died the day we were born.
And since then all we are living is a pretense,
a vanity show to drag the Carcass around
– into schools,
where it gains layers of dust,
along with books that once were real, but are
now as dead as our stale trivialities,
and what is left is an empty shell of an empty
world that hits us hard,
leaving us diseased
even in our healthiest imagination;
– into homes,
where it is used, abused, and overused in the
name of love
till it can no longer satisfy.

And so, annoyed, repulsed, feeling cheated upon,
we render it a most hasty burial,
the stench being too much for our
delicate sensibilities;
– into marketplaces, where, though dead,
it is prostituted like the virgin,
and by the time we realize that this "becoming",
this self-aggrandizement was nothing
but a cheap bargain to buy Time,
the soul has already left for better shores.

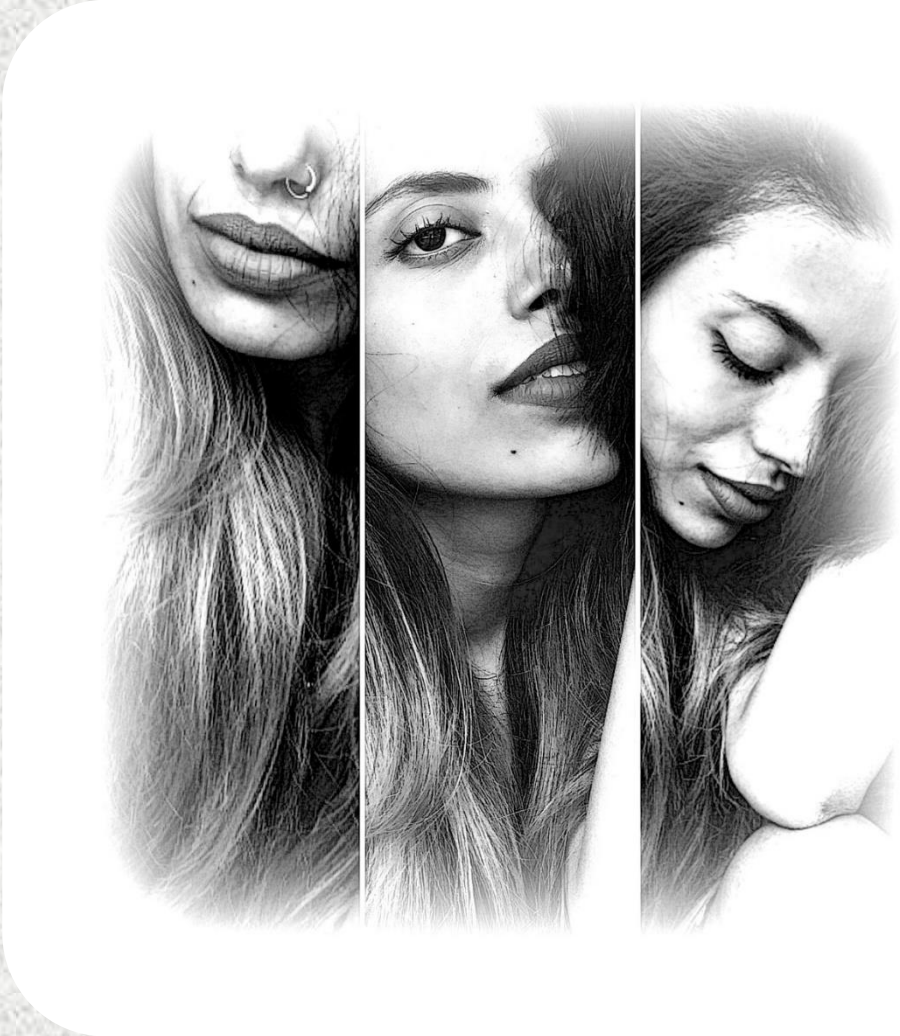
Yet, we continue, despite ourselves,
in the search of Meaning –
we the mockingbirds,
in the twilight of our lives, still dream of
the Eternal Spring

as the dead wood of our own
miserable failings,
on which we happily perch,
begins to show signs of essential, final decay.

Don't you think the Carcass is tired
of the games behind
our little, monumental journeys,
our theatrical endeavours at meaning-making,
our indecent lust for immortality?

I think
in a world that could never stand up,
we have had enough – this deception at ennobling.
I too am tired and it's time for the curtains to
fall.

Let's accept it for what it is –
Just a dead body.
Just a mere Nothing:
And honour it with what it truly deserves:
Our living death.



# Silence

If only I could just vanish.
The constant hum of lifelong complaints,
regrets, unfulfilled desires ...
the cacophony of feeble voices fighting for
humanity,
against humanity –
they all make me sick.
My mind goes numb and the noise
takes up permanent residence there.
Unrelenting, almost viciously,
demanding every word to be heard.

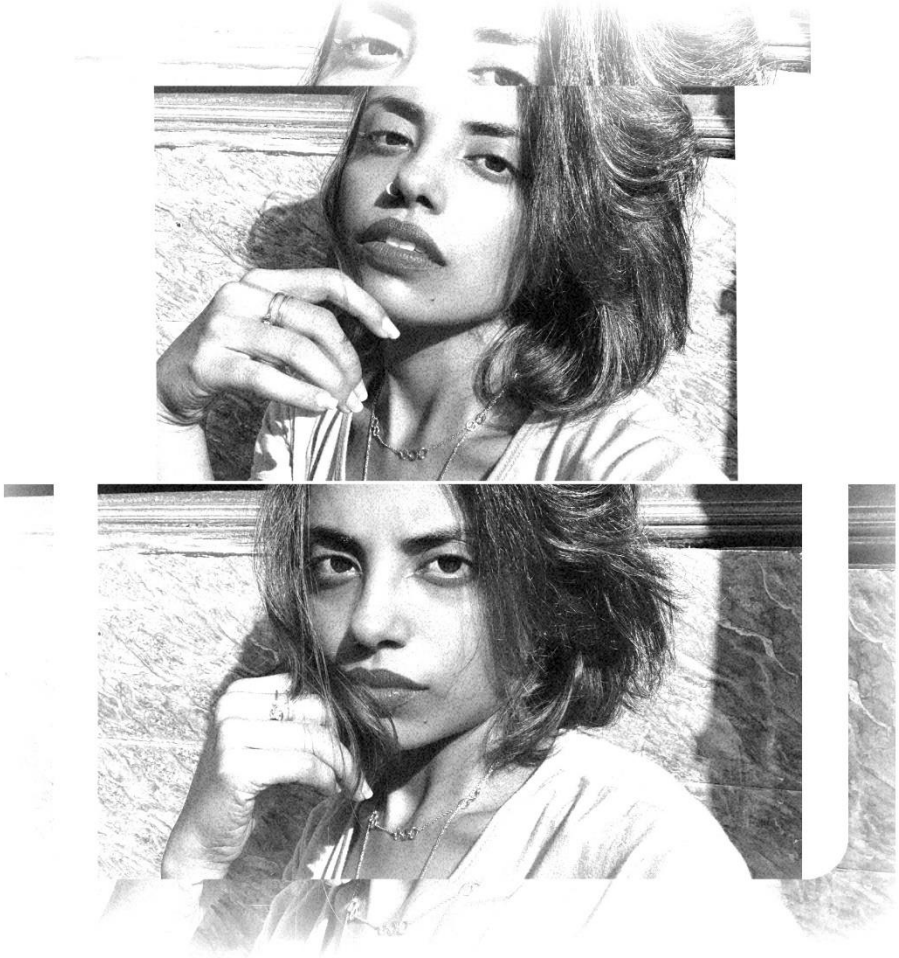
To what pass have we come
that silence is no longer the Essential,
that crowd is our way to belong, to become,
to believe –
with its implicit brutality?

Streets are full, the sea, swollen,
and yet a great emptiness abounds.
Mass-produced in factories, schools, libraries and homes,
a boisterous culture is slowly, steadily taking over –
of empty lives, and empty talks.
With a hint of chic propriety.

And it's this we breathe, eat and breed as we lie, avenge, deceive
through hollow words of our stark morality.
Lost, crippled,
with not a moment's calm in a world of garrulous tedium,
I can only despairingly wait
for the night to fall when this torture will end, and my gasping soul can finally breathe.

But will the night bring what I desperately seek
as the chaos closes in on me from all sides?
No.
I am fighting a senseless war
with the world outside
to save the world within:
a hopeless plea to stop the blast
that has deafened the man within.
My voice echoes in vacuum, and everywhere
the burlesque goes on –
catapulting noise, noise, and more noise.
A silent Universe bears our infantilism,
helplessly.

Sometimes I wish
people could only be seen, not heard.



# Part 2

# Alone

Days run into one another slowly, imbricated,
with a shade of unconscious
sadness
and I sit in my empty room, silently,
watching them go down with the sun.

Some fill this emptiness with fake loves.
Some with the drone of traffic,
human voices,
lifeworks.
And still others with regret of unlived, young
dreams, cut short in sleep.

But I like it the way it is devoid of
embellishments.
Stark, honest, cruel and intimate like the

My life has the simplicity of the morning dew –
there is no affectation,
no theatrics.
I have no one to please.
I just am.

It is a strange journey and I have no companion:
All philosophical musings, meanings, and quests
have ended.
There's nothing to create.
Nothing to be understood and defined.
Nothing to live by and for.

A familiar peace has filled the very core of my being
– the inward I sink, the outward I rise.
And the awareness that in reality
there is no journey itself but only the passage of
time:

the crossing-over to that shore where nothing
awaits,
not even Time –
this certainty colours everything
in the silvery hue of the smoke,
the room, the air, my morning, noon, and night.

Yes,
I drift away like the river which has no
consciousness
of living, except that it exists:
And that existence is its meaning, its music,
its goal.

No fear of the unknown,
no pain to hide behind the smile
I can look into the mirror, straight,

wanting,
knowing,
understanding,
and believing that the mirror won't turn away its eyes.

There is a rare joy in this:
I feel young, I feel old.
I feel complete
as I sit by the window and watch
the days passing by.
All alone.

# The Choice

It was dark under there –
Like curse.
Like sin.
Like death of the night.

With no one except Solitude
that filtered through the blinds,
somewhere someone was discovering a new
meaning
in fleeting passions of an untamed love
as lonely stars poured over the trembling dawn:
and there I was, far, far away,
in a space where translucent memories
rose and flooded the sacred shrine
I had left ...
to oblivion, to anonymity, to dust.

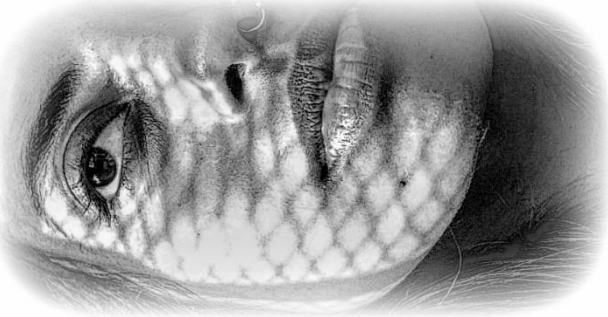
I had no one to write to,
all letters had already been dispatched.
I had no one to speak to,
my utterances no longer could find
syllables that matched.
But still,
the clarity of the moonlight
awakened a burning desire to re-live.

I found a black rose on the table,
with a few petals carelessly strewn over a crumpled
piece
of yellowed paper from which letters were vanishing,
slowly, almost unnoticeably,
as if written in a forgetful ink.
I wanted them to stop, to talk to me,
but where I was, my voice couldn't reach them,

and so silently, dejectedly,
I watched them leave,
just as one watches a death procession –
with a grim nostalgia, and a little uncomfortably.

For death,
be it of the body or of the soul,
is still tinted with shades of despair.
But even this undeniable truth could not silence
the desire that had now caught hold of me.
The deceased words had cleaved me open;
the sea within was in turmoil.
It was eager – to create, to destroy
what was possible in me, what was left in me.
It swelled, it rushed out like a tornado,
like a god, like a phantom that rises from the grave as
night descends.

Yes,
that night had now come searching for me:
the darkness of my room
were to be my last hope
or my self-created abyss –
where I could choose to die, or let the sunlight in …



# Safety Net

Some things start early in life,
right from the day you are conceived,
weave by weave,
through the long nine months
till the day you finally sleep.

The grave has been dug: the house awaits
the wake,
and still my caravan won't pass.
It stretches far,
behind every single thought, and soon,
all you see is the closed trap door
and a sign of No Exit.

You try to scream, but the vacuum is thick:
your voice has lost its feet.

You try to breathe, but the net has you by the
throat.
There can be no release.

You look up and see a long line of circular bodies
that once had a circular soul
pushing, jostling.
They rush to the green light, where little bundles of
joy are being sold.
Restfulness, serenity, gratitude abounds,
yet no one chooses the first flight:
no one takes home the summer night.

As far as the eye can see,
there is an ocean of humanity.
With bobbing heads and unsatisfied bellies,
they swear, they fight

to gobble up the moneyed prime;
they scramble, they hasten,
to make do with what is left of Time.

Still standing
at a distance from this freak show,
I wonder what for—grappling with this
uncomfortable thought
for more than what is a decent duration ...
They all expect me to join in:
my friends, my family, my known unknowns:
to join the rush,
to make a successful whole of the unsuccessful,
incomplete me.
Yet all I can see is
another soul-less soul trapped
in the Safety Net of mass-insanity.

I guess:
Some things only end with the end of life.

I think there's still time for the caravan to pass.
Should I go and fill back the grave,
or will walking corpses do it for me?

Death and pity pervade my hollow earth,
my empty sky ...

# Forgiveness

I was back into the grave.
It was as if years had collapsed into one day
today,
and yet the funeral was not over.

The hands that had once slaughtered
an innocent heart
were now a fistful of earth,
too anxious to bury the conscience
of a blood-smeared stain.

A quick glance and I saw heads bowed,
in happy thoughts of the quick demise,
and while you thought mercy was near hand,
the smirk beneath the practised face unveiled
the all-naked lie.

The nocturnal air tried to dissipate what it could,
but the stink of superior moralities
had even saturated the apologetic sky.
Nothing could be done,
except to endure the niceties awhile –
for soon,
I was to return to the womb.

I could still hear the echo of the death rattle,
a fine music they liked to play
in sweet little precious lullabies that kept my tired
nights awake.
A universe had come to descend in it,
the one I fought to save;
and this symphony was the last vagary
that their honest sham could weave.

Despite, my deathbed was not spared –
I was expected to forget, relieve.
And now
in this faceless dawn of my life,
as I lie six feet deep, with the dust of the stars and
the moons,
the outside world is drowning from excesses,
yet the inside of my soul is facing
a drought of forgiveness.

# The Street

For most,
it ends where the threshold begins,
but for me it never ends – within, without.

It becomes me; it gathers around,
and wherever I look,
the Street extends its arm and reaches out.

My soul lives in the Street
invisible to the passer-by, where every day,
in the comforting potholes,
the captured light of sunset saves the day
from dying a solitary death
before a crowd of indifferent eyes.

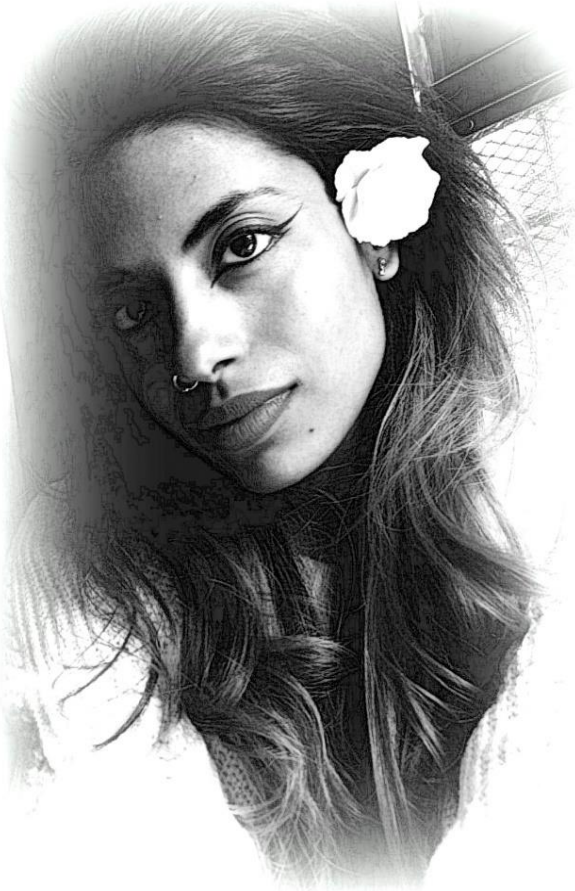
The world outside is no less callous

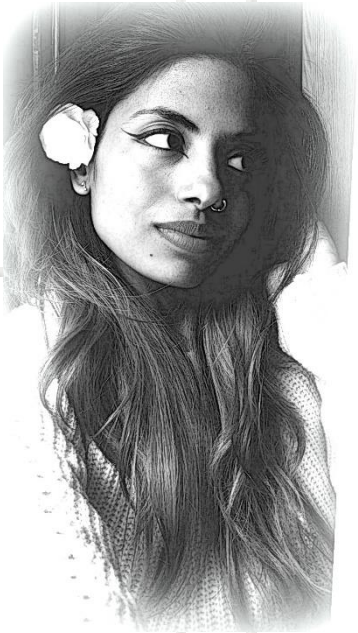
than the one inside.
Only a sense of the Other makes it
less intimate.
But when that Other dissolves and you find
yourself
suddenly looking at strange faces of the Known,
the Street becomes your home:
and that familiar warmth of the hearth
becomes the impersonal heat of the sun –
nothing remains except the feeling of an irreparable
loss.

A tear trickles down
from the empty eye of the cobblestone,
in memory of the music busy feet created as they
walked by on their way
to the Dream;

a bitter smile rose from the lips of
the overcast sky –
and the tear was lost in unrepentant rivers of the
rain.

For most,
it begins where the past journey ends,
but for me it never begins – today, tomorrow.
It stands still and yet my feet lose their ground.
I think I have escaped it.
And yet lost caricatures on the wall laugh:
the Street traces me out.





# A Consummation

To live a life I never wanted to be born into.
To wake myself every day, to bear this unending night.
You have me.
I no longer try to escape.
There sure is no reprieve, but there are more humane ways
to inflict pain.
Grief, come and stay tonight for a long, long time.

The rain has come to witness our union.
I can hear a stirred heaving in her sounds.
Do not disappoint her.
Do not delay, for I have left the door open.
Sweep in and undo my existence.
Make love. And ever so kindly destroy.

An empty bed, naked in her raw ache, is the most
painful thing to bear.
The silken feel of the bed sheet is in stark
contrast
to the lines on my face:
For while they have their own stories to tell,
the bed only has its anguish to share.
Ruin her, lest those lines be disgraced.
I have a lost sea somewhere deep inside me:
And I long to find back my way.
My own heart is cold, but your silhouette is
warm.
The air is silent,
the sea, despaired.
Dive in. Envelope me.
Raise me from the grave I wear.

As I see in you my own reflection,

clear,
patient,
moved,
eternal,
the child within begins to dream.
Of an infinite play of an infinite Master.
Thus engulfed in the mirth of your myriad little plays,
my dead eyes laugh their one last laughter.

Grief, come, for I have no more lives to wait.

# Shadow Lines

All I wanted was to brush them away.
Their creeping tentacles a mocking testament to hope,
in this world of gray,
a world where resistance was as futile as endeavour;
a world of enforced inertia and decay;
a world I had come to accept and loathe at the same time.
But somehow,
despite my wishful thinking of packing them off
to End's gate,
they always came back.
Step by step,
dribbling like drops of water into a forgotten crack,

to rest in the corners of my guilty eyes.
Ominous,
crooked,
blasé as the stranger's faceless disguise –
the stubborn relentless shadow lines.

All I wanted was a place to run to and hide.
From the encroaching darkness that had turned
the sun grim,
reluctant,
afraid to smile:
a darkness so consuming that were I to open my
heart's inside,
the day could sweep in, to lay low,
quiet, inactive for a long, long while.
But somehow,
even with iron bars soldered on my soul,

they always won.
Bit by bit,
marching as daunting crawlies, unvanquished,
to rip open blocked spaces of the idled mind.
Resolute,
uninterrupted,
tight as the stranger's merciless bind –
the stubborn relentless shadow lines.

All I wanted was a season untried.
To once experience what they called 'the gift of life':
a season where the heart could sing and smile;
a season of promise, of spring in style;
a season to love, without the weight of strife.
But somehow,
as if resurrection was a birth right,
they always returned.

One by one,
burning the ivy like a most fragile prayer,
to turn to ash this shrine of mine.
Impenitent,
haughty,
terrible as the stranger's nameless sign –
the stubborn relentless shadow lines.

All I wanted was a chance to strive.
Sow an unpolished dream that could one day
thrive:
a dream that nurtured a piece of sky;
a dream to possess, to esteem and guide;
a dream held close, a dream held high.
But somehow,
amidst the pleas of a merciful letting go,
they played it well, their final game.
Day by day,

eroding inside with their wanton shame,
to blast to dust, to cover with slime.
Bottomless,
Limitless,
perfected as the stranger's flawless crime –
the stubborn relentless shadow lines,
the stubborn relentless shadow lines ...

# Forgetting

A distinct taste is still lingering in
my mouth,
and with every passing moment, as the orange
moonlight grows dim,
I can feel it overwhelm the sadness that comes
with living.

I have been trying to forget,
but a brave face keeps finding me
through the mirror that rests buried in the grave
of my soul.
They say, we can only let slip
what we never held. A sort of episteme.
Then why do these reflections bother
the placidity in which my inner sea has
grown?

A tumult is taking shape
in the eye of its seemingly quiet waves,
and the mirror is now afraid.
Everything has turned into nothing:
there is no past, no present.
Yet the knife keeps chiseling in.

The long-nurtured solitude is showing
first signs of collapse.
There is no other place to run to,
there is no other place to hide.
Silently I watch this sharpness flirt
with my silver heart.
A tenderness here, some gentleness there:
with artful nuances,
she wants to tease, like a playful lover.
But youth is gone
and the flame is done;

all I crave now is complete surrender.
Black blood must rush out
and bring this rendezvous to an end.
Even the dreams that had kept the eyes awake
are now returning –
back to their land of the unbroken sleep.
Then why should I be asked to wait?
Loyal shadows must die
and this stale nostalgia must leave.

The crypt is shrinking.
There can be no more delay.

In this moment of reckoning.
a cerulean morning descends,
only to give way to frailty,
certain, unhesitant, and paradoxically,
robust in its constitution,

which then gently but unceasingly swells up
the inside of the sun,
thus overwhelming the heaviness that comes from
possessing.

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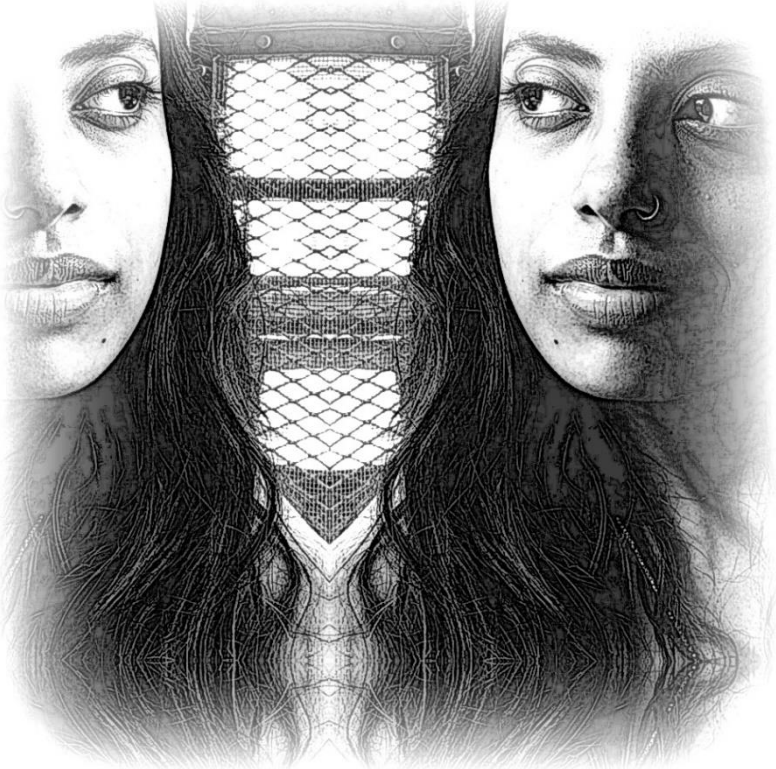
The Outside vanishes,
the lingering stops and I ... I forget.



# A Hasty Burial for the Self

I was sleeping in my bed when I heard
the hard knocking on the door.
A sigh had just been muffled.
Confined voices were calling out my name
and a few eyes were peeping in.
It must be something terrible, to seek me out
this sudden.
In such an odd, unwelcome way in the dead of
the night.

Feeling important, but also somewhat
disgusted,
I leapt out and opened the door.
"It has happened."
Just a single sentence and then – silence.
I understood: They had come to hear.

I had barely managed the first word when they all rushed in –
The voices.
The eyes.
The sigh.
And with them, jostling, squirming bodies and their dirt-laden feet.
"You were right." They all spoke out apologetically. Together.
"Just as you said it would." "But why?"

I was still standing at the door. Seemed like a century had passed.
The grating, the shuffling of rubber soles on the wooden floor
was becoming unbearable to me –
with my eyes still stuck on clumps of the fresh dirt they had brought in.

It was only with another question that they
pulled themselves away:
"What should we do now? We were never told."
They drawled again in unison –
The shoulders.
The necks.
The chests without heads.
Each one expecting.
Each one eager like death.

I was horrified.
Not so much by the situation as by their
headlessness.
I had not predicted this.
It was an assault on decency.
Such things happened in bad dreams:
To dogs. To insects.

To worms that crawl out when the rain has
ceased.
Yet this was real.
As real as the night that surrounded us.
As real as the room and its rich emptiness.

"Are they aware of this?" was my first thought
after my momentary horror had passed.
The mind said: Must be, for they all are here
now.
These words that cling to you: without any spine,
without any mouth.
I could sense each voice,
standing apart as their headless bodies merged
into one another.
It implored, almost shamelessly:
"Tell us what to do."

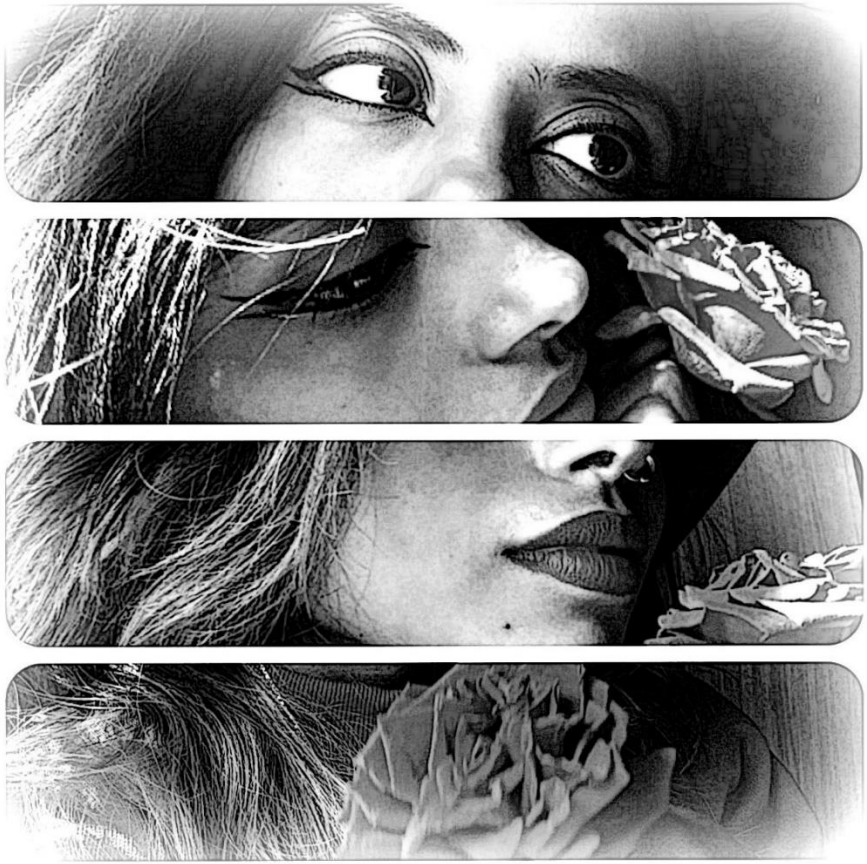
"Is there any hope?"
*Can it be undone?"
The voices had the questions:
I, my silence.
So, we just stood there –
A sea of humanity in what just a while ago was my room.
I could offer no consolation.
It had all been decided long ago –
They were warned to forgive.
To redeem.
To atone.
But they didn't.
And now 'It' had to go.
Only I didn't know the heads would too!

So here I was, mobbed,

with the hollowness staring right through me.
"No" was all I could utter.
"Then, we must start at once."
"Cannot be left like this."
"It is indecent," one of the headless body had started muttering.
Others joined in.
"Yes, yes. It stinks."
"Do away, before it begins to rot."
"Do away, before it comes around to bite us sharp."
Hearing this I felt murderous. I felt relieved.
And, heaven forbid, I wanted to laugh.
The heat inside the room was stifling –
A sudden nausea overcame me.
A warm fear had diffused into and saturated the stale air.
I rushed out. I had to escape.

Such things get trapped in the eye as a reluctant wind begins to blow.
I suppose they don't hurt much:
for the few images 'It' had held, gradually, painlessly forgot to breathe.
So just a lone rose was ceremoniously, almost sanctimoniously, placed, as there are no grand eulogies to sing.
I stood at a far, far distance. Their chants couldn't reach me, but I knew there was no grief.
No compunction felt as they proceeded with their ghastly rite. To feel proper.
Civilized. Honorable. Human, maybe?
Arrest, arrest these tears, why the living had long ceased to weep ...

It has been a hasty burial, well-deserved:
Come, begin the ceremonial feast.



# The Edge

The edge and I have a strong affinity.
I have lived beside it for many dead years of
my vacant life,
yet it has never left me.
So many have come and gone:
lovers,
friends,
companions.
But it has stayed the same.
Like a stranger known. From far-off shores.

Like the morning ray,
its innocence has always come and healed
the wounds grand humanity has left
on my darkened soul.
Sometimes,

I wonder if it and I are not alike ...
Outcasts,
our faces bear the same scars –
of deceit,
of prejudice,
of hatred and pure spite.
Yet, nothing has ever touched it:
Still the same as the day I found it.
Ten years ago, on a moonless autumn night.
The sea was reflecting a young heart,
one that had waited for
a long, long while;
and it was waiting again that day:
the cold barrel touching the left temple.
The trigger contemplating a final choice.
Yes,
there we met.
Rising with the crash of the sea waves,

dying with the sweet lullaby of the night.

Since then,
the barrel has never touched this dark skin again.
There were many a night though
when the windows vanished into the stark,
gaping wall of the room,
Door less, it seemed like a hungry, thirsting
monster,
ready to gobble everything up, me included.
Unsurprisingly, I was always gasping for air.
But never gone. Dead.

For every time, the edge rescued me –
the night would flow back into a new dawn
And we would stand, together, watching the sun fill
up the horizon,
to rise, to subside.

But those same morning have now grown stale.
Like flowers the sunlight has ultimately shunned:
Even life's music has lost its one charm.
Now it only plays to please obscenities.
And so,
I am back there.
Standing at the edge.
The edge, the edge, the edge.

The barrel is shining in the moonlight;
the sea is calling out, her arms outstretched –
To overwhelm.
To surrender.
To embrace.
How can I deny her again?

The edge and I have a strange affinity.
As I fall, it becomes me.

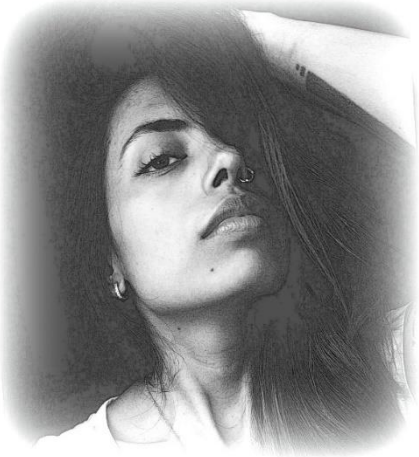
# Cage

The Earth was sleeping,
even the graveyards were still.
A strange quietness had suddenly filled the nocturnal air,
warming the bones.
The shrill wind,
blowing from the east, ruffled the fallen leaves,
yet the green sea lay undisturbed.
All eyes that had watched its crossing,
every day,
these many years,
had disappeared unobtrusively into the twilight sky.
Only a half-burnt moon still remained –
It was he who called out to me.

The voice was tender.
Like the ivy that had crept through the bars:
witness to my tears, my pain, and years of
unearned shame.
It quivered with every word.
It paused, it waited.
But I had been silent for a very long time now.
This soliloquy became precious –
the sea of memories came rushing back:
the bustling courtyard,
children's games,
the old promise of spring,
and her sun-kissed face.
I could stay there forever.
The darkness of the room was not me.

Silver streaks came floating in:

The bareness of the room was no longer cold:
I was surrounded by a feathery halo.
And it felt warm.
At last.
Like the mother's embrace.
Like the hearth where a lone childhood had slept
for many winter years.
The voice had filled up my room with a rare
sunlight:
The serenity of the silvery dawn
washed away my stain of disgrace.
I was reborn, forgiven, reclaimed.
My saviour had come,
to eat away the chains of space and time:
I was free. Finally free:
My self-wrought cage melted away
with the mirror of the night.



# The Crowd and the Room

People are afraid to be alone.
The room scares them.
The crowd is better.
It hides. It accepts.
It turns everything into
the lowest common denominator.
And above all,
it fills –
the emptiness that monotonous years
of threadbare relationships continue to build.

I don't like the crowd.
The room is my haven.
Away from the chatter, away from factories and
city lights,
it keeps me safe. Sane and alive.

When bands of known unknowns close in
and suicide seems like a peaceful, unending
night,
there, the days assume a strange lightness
as I stay in.
No one can touch me.
The Outside ceases to exist.
Life comes to bear a frank honesty.
Like the first morning ray.
Like a finality, like a child's innocent play.

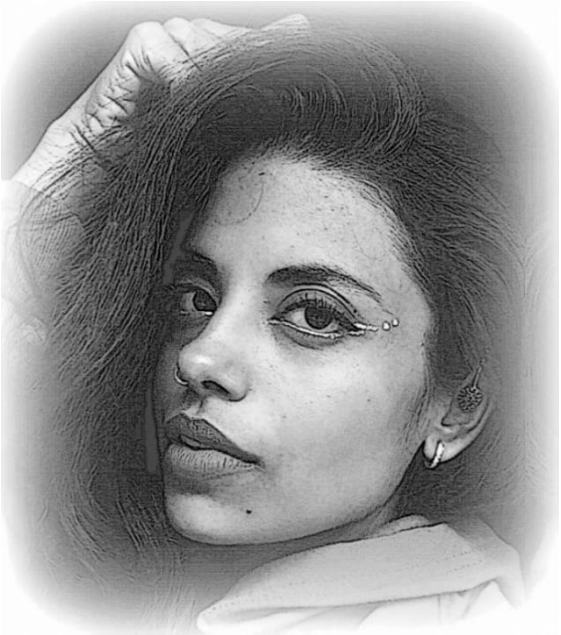
A bluebird comes to visit me.
And as people begin to find themselves
in the effervescence of the crowd,
I lose myself in her stillness,
in the silence of her last evening song.
The fire in my room dies;

the bed grows cold, and finally,
sleep descends,
unburdened,
undisturbed.

Even Time forgets, in the room – to move.
It has no one to hate, no one to rush to.
Yet,
I know this tranquillity hides a great tempest:
one that is fettered within my soul.
I am aware of its gradual waxing,
of its silent ruminations.
But people can't hear it:
the crowd has deafened the whole.
They pretend to live:
someone enters and they feel important, once
again.

The room has no visitors, only solitude and me.
It has no illusions:
that something, someone will someday, somehow fulfil.
Even years of a lover's embrace cannot cure.

While the crowd forgets, the room remembers:
We are our own hell.
And we have to walk through, alone, the only way there is.
I don't feel human among humans –
the room saves me from me, from them.



# Mannequin and I

They say the world is an illusion.
I say it cannot be.

Sometimes I get caught in a dreamless dream.
There, floating in the mirth of unconsciousness,
I find the psychedelic truth staring back at me.
When I come to life as a new day begins
I wish to touch, breathe in the Otherness
that lures the child I hide within:
A serene sky and the golden orb.
Fluttering hopes.
And a sea that sings.

The dawn arrives in scarlet hues.
Darkening the blue of my tired eyes:

standing, I watch it as it creeps in
through windows, doors and droopy lids
and steals away the sleepy night.
A courtyard starts bustling, as tiny feet run about:
The simmering tea mimicking the red morning sky,
A growing hum of voices, eager, fresh,
waking up the street where I live by.

What a feeling it is to be human,
worldly,
palpable,
magical ...
To tread this unknowable shore of possibilities,
and leave a few footprints on the sands of Space
and Time.
Alas, this world is not my reality ...

They say the world is a Being:
I say it cannot be.

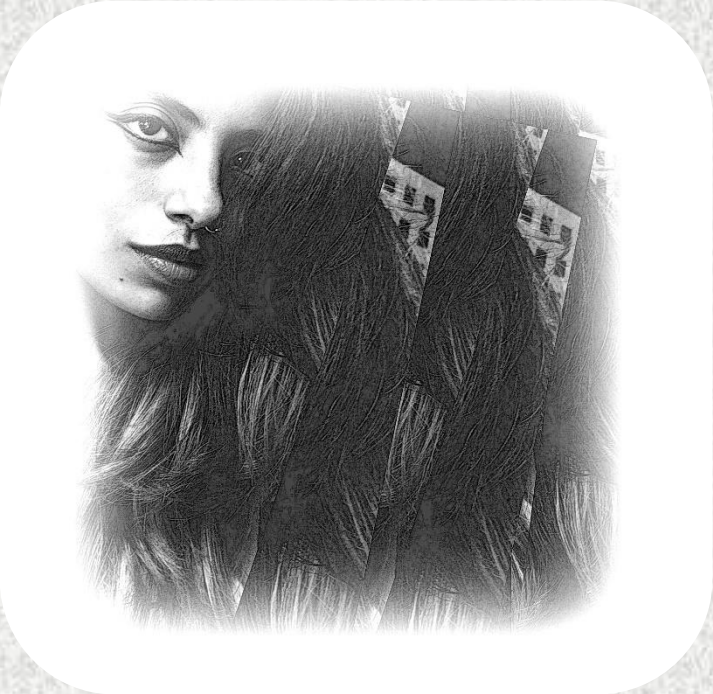
Every day as I helplessly struggle to save the warmth
of the previous night,
it passes through me – coldly.
I totter to my feet,
and slip back in this prison of mine.
I want to run.
Far, far, very far away, to the nearest escape –
where no one can see me and I, no one.
But the refuge I seek, I dream, I conjure, I feel
ends where this old life begins.
Sunlight gathers in from all sides,
splintering my reflection in its thousand eyes:
Sitting.
I watch it bring back the memories

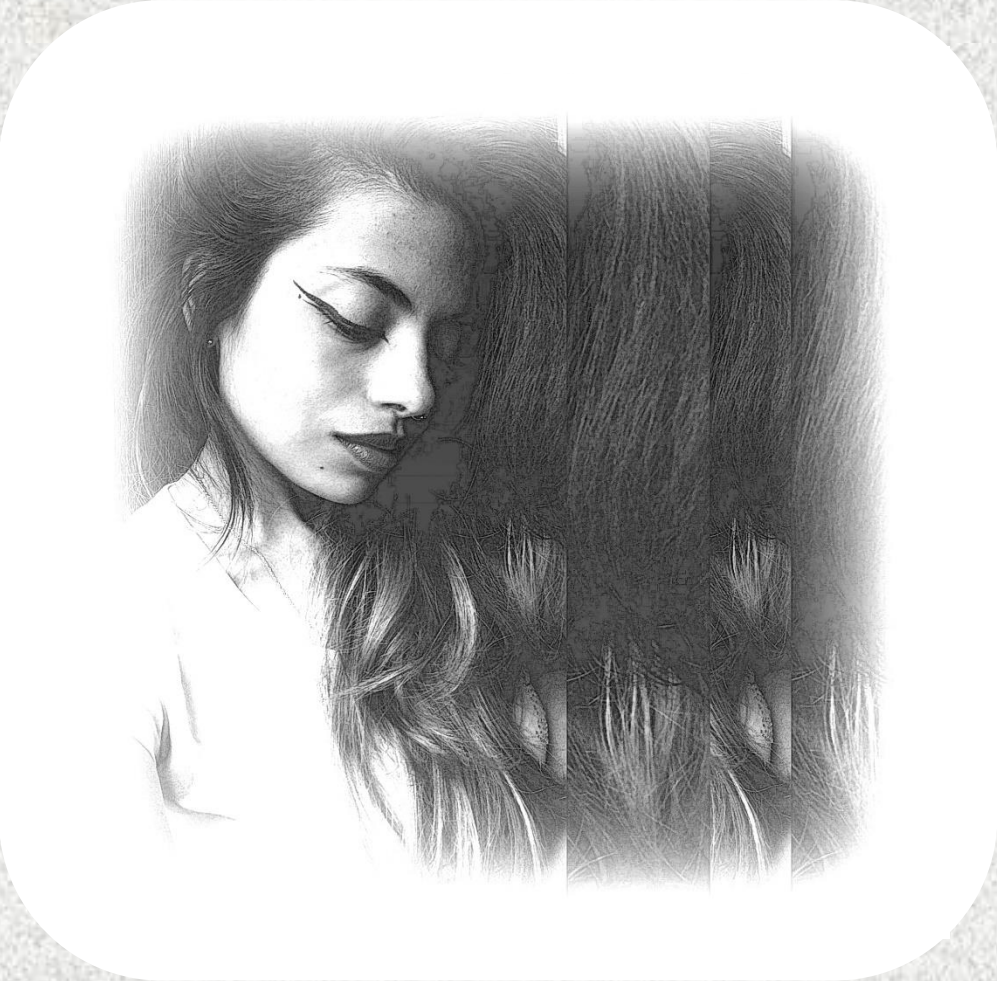
forgotten with the dark.
My grave swells up:
Time to live every death I died.
The walls reverberate;
an eerie silence starts to puff out rings of smoke;
and as the cacophony of voices begins to scar
the tortured mind,
I see a shrinking caricature of old lies and deceit,
spreading out, twistingly, steadily, ominously, on
the face I keep.

What a feeling it is to be not human,
innocent, untouchable, quiet ...
To walk unhurt in this market of fake emotions
and platitudinous truths,
and leave no footprints on the sands of Space and
Time.

So, I paint my face in the whiteness of the shroud,
sticking up a generous but plastic smile.
But can I feel dead inside?
The glass wall stands erect yet again.
Alas, this world too is not my reality ...

I want to be you, you want to be me;
and thus the impassable glass wall widens –
Its resolute silence seeps within.
Solipsistic, the two worlds shrink and shatter.





# Black

I had always heard:
the great rivers were born white.
Like silvery rays of the moon.
Like gratitude.
Like pride.
With water that bore the elixir of life.
The great rivers that spread far and wide ...
And then, I met her: She who had sinned.
From a womb that had not yet conceived the sunrise,
She flowed out.
Like a confession kept safe in the ears of the night.

With her first footsteps
the earth gathered about in little promises,

which filled the farthest corner of the sky.
She was Eternity,
a mysterious beginning of a mysterious flight.
The certainty of her being reassured my troubled
eye:
Much time had passed in waiting,
in anticipating the rain.
Now there was no space, no dimensions to bind.
Her fullness had come to quench the drought
that had become my mind.
Burning.
Burning in a hell that was mine yet not mine.
In a last bid, to somehow miraculously find
that path to escape.

They had spawned it, fed it, and now it was
swallowing my soul.

The horizon was full of dirt:
like the lines on my face, dirt of years that had
run down since my fall from grace.
Existing. Breathing. Under an ashen peel. To
undo my day of judgment.
Pretense had become second nature.
The whiteness of the shroud had eaten away my
insides.
Night left me.
I was forsaken, eclipsed by the sun and its
unforgiving light.

It was then I saw her for the first time.
As a storm meets the silent shore,
after years of patient forbearance.
With shadows that carried no sins of death,
no nameless days of shame.
She covered me up in familiar skin, bereft of

humiliation and unjust pain,
and thus I awoke,
like a withered rose that dons the dust of Self, to
be born again. And again.

A sudden, almost inexplicable joy
ripped me open.
I became the wave, born, spent, cast asunder.
I looked back and she was still there,
swelling up the moonlit sky –
the darkness that was her, the darkness that I
now held inside.
I had always heard:
The great rivers were born white.
But now I know the still greater truth:

That the greatest river is never white. I am black
and black is mine.

# The River

Despite my reluctant to living,
the horror of repeating this morbidity through
infinite series,
I am always held back.
And yet, every time,
the Edge awaits my arrival.
I wonder why even that elemental, primitive rush
which comes from gazing deep into the abyss can't
lure me:
the uncertainty with which I watch it develop
inside me,
watches me back –
a soul-less mirror it seems,
where the Edge becomes a whole earth:
The one I belong to
and into which she too gazes,

as if affirming our Ancient pact to return to the River.

I wish I could cut out my heart – so that she would ravage me
with her selfish, wild, relentless love –
leaving only the soft dust of oblivion,
Reflections superimposed upon reflections
have been filling in the desert where I was born:
vanities of an acquired, adolescent taste that now refuses to leave.
Surrounded by shining surfaces, of those mirrors,
I dream of the nondescript streets where those vanities first learnt to walk.
Those images come and go.
Easily.
Painlessly.

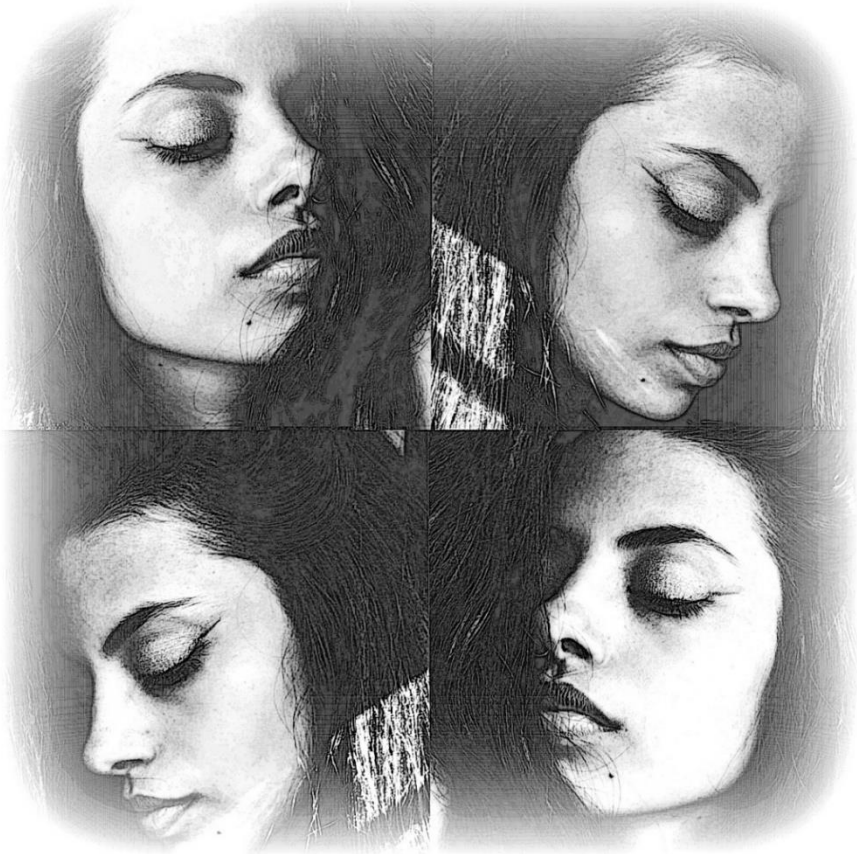
Like letters on an invisible page.
And yet I can hear the echoes of their dying footfall.

Past is a heavy weight to carry:
my flimsy reflections have only the fading nostalgia to rest upon,
and these waves are cruel, unforgiving.
A sane death would have honoured them
if only they could stop at the carcass of my being.
But like shadows unaware of themselves,
they try to outdo one another, only to be self-consumed.
Inexpiable guilt is their only fate. And amnesic perpetuity, my only truth.

Being in the deep of this time and again has
done strange things to me,
to the propensity of forgetting.

The scars seem like badges, useless, inconsequential yet uncomfortably smug –
curio pieces to impress the gentry.
Only there are no prospects of fine dining
in the evening of this last supper ...

Standing at the precipice that separates the living from the dead,
this is what the Edge tells me again –
to wash away with her infinitude the absurdity of my self-inflicted tortures,
to finally become one with the River.



# An Echo of Lost Time

It was not just pace that separated us.
A blind selfish desire it was
to realise my Infinity through him.
For when I found him I was already half-finished.
To have found some hope however fickle,
in this never-ending facade of forced existences
was not enough.
I wanted him to save me.
From myself.
And yet I blamed him when he left.

Alone with mirrors that reflected nothing,
except the fragments of a lifetime of hoarded delusions,

was I hurt, I cannot say,
without a certain hint of pity and self-directed derision.
It was more than the pain of
unrequited feelings.
It was murder.
Did he not see what fragile, human thirst had been born
inside that innocent womb,
which he had suddenly, unknowingly resuscitated ...
That it could finally be realized.
Could be breathed, could be touched, could be lived:
Yes, it was sacrilege,
as Time consciously raped what was inviolable,
what was nameless in that dying soul.

May be he saw what I didn't –
The rawness of that naked need
which shouted from the depths of the convoluted poesy:
And like a hunger which feeds upon itself,
it drew the two of us in.
Whom should I blame?
That unbearable, inhuman force which brought two strangers,
too close,
too fast,
too late,
to live a little?
Or the deceit that comes with living, with being?

Looking back, I can graciously say
it was the only piece of Eternity promised.

I had nothing to offer but everything to take.
It would have been an unfair trade.
A golden prison, but prison indeed.
He was the end of the Journey.
A point reached and stayed.
And then forgiven, released.

It was not just space that separated us.
It was Time.
For he had only begun to breathe
while I had in my waiting died.

# Yet I Hope

Forgiveness today is hard to come by.
This broken heart,
tormented by its own trappings,
has nothing left to hide.
Pain, regrets, disillusionments, grief ...
With infinite space within, without,
an open sky, an unending earth,
there really is nowhere to go.
Lost in the deafening silence of my long-lost selves,
I wait for the phoenix to rise,
that future whose pieces lie scattered, far and wide.

Sleep today is hard to come by.
My restless soul,

now that it's done fighting
the self-created demons of unanswered questions,
finds no one by its side.
All hands that latched on in its moments of success
lie sated;
only a few rags of past days hang down
like peeled-off skin,
like badges,
like tumors.
It has to start soon, the bed is made, cold, empty,
yet six feet below seem too difficult to cross.
Still held back by hopes that have long since died ...

Peace today is hard to come by.
Masochistically,
the twinges of conscience keep pricking its walls
for truths that themselves had lied.

What could they discover in those ages of dirt,
when the world outside was vanishing fast?
In a strange, almost fanatic delirium, to escape,
to absolve, to somehow eclipse the sins of omission,
the sins of commission,
the sins of existence in the tears I had cried.

Deliverance today is hard to come by.
A deep desire,
scorching its way through my resistant veins,
digs out the abyss that had dissolved, dried.
Looking down for one sign of kindness,
I see only reflections in that pitch dark,
of all wrong turns, of all mistakes.
Far from the grace of the moonlit sky,
they laugh, at me, with me ... at my fallen pride.

Yet I hope ....

# Sleep, a Stranger and the Book

Sleep had kept her alive.
Sleep and indifference:
Two of her most peculiar afflictions that even to this day
tease at my soul.

...

She was born in a world where symbols are inviolable –
arising with the litany of the mass and echoing till the night drowns
every noise, human, non-human.
Yet she could never bear these insuperable motifs.
And so when they made themselves felt,
in her body, in her mind,

she found solace where the living never go –
deep into the cemetery where they once buried her youth.
For seclusion. For the answer, for the question.

Why she sought this state of inactivity could be better understood in retrospect.
But we are not allowed to trace that path.
All we know is that sleep kept her breathing
Even after all these years,
I can still vividly remember the day I met her.
It has less to do with memory than with the book that lay on the table.
With her hand thoughtfully marking lines on the rough paper,
that book is now watching me,
from the top of the pile as I write these words
in a room full of silent ghosts.

From the ripples of that lost time, I could only save it.
And as a favor returned, it saved me,
from the gentle storm that had come to drown me in the blue ink
that once smeared the whiteness of the page with her ominous smirk.
With age,
the blueness has become darker, more sinister –
so much so that sometimes, I hear it challenging
the night sky that steals into the room.

In that silence,
its laughs, its threats assume monstrous proportions.
My fear of being eaten up becomes real once again,
and the floor beneath begins to escape.

But I have nowhere to run.
The earth beyond the room
has long dissolved into the sky with the first laugh.
Now all that are left is a lone fragment,
one which the blue ink has made its palette,
and a face to be covered with the rich stain.

That is when I always pick up the book.
Slowly.
I turn over to the page where she had left her final
remarks –
the horror stops,
the dead return to their graves.
The book swallows up all,
the space,
the time,
the sky,

and the repeated, almost erotic movements of her hand,
as she, unaware of my prying eyes, thoughtfully marks
away those lines that will save me again, another day.

In trying to pull out some meaning from that black-
and-white unreality,
so aloof she was of the world whih was slowly closing
in on us
that the very swiftness of her hand betrayed the most
intense shades
of anxiety –
every stroke of the pen fed it,
adding dimensions upon dimensions to what she was
trying to escape.
Like a trance, her warm, rising exhalations slowly
fogged the world beyond and trapped us in.

Thus transported into a semantic infinity of being
and becoming,
we died and lived simultaneously:
to spare what was left in us,
to accept what had become of us.

...

The page flutters, and I am brought back to this night
that doesn't wear thin.
Among metaphors that create and destroy my
monochrome realities
with every passing breath, I stand,
begging once again for that very same sleep,
one that kept her alive, before dissolving her in the
blueness of the ink.

# Poetry Has Become Dark

The nights and days have merged into
one another,
poetry has become dark.
Words have lost meaning, and existence pricks
like a shard.
I stand at the horizon witnessing this union of
present, past
and cannot help wondering:
we all wanted the same things,
after all,
yet we have been passed up by life –
hollow echoes of noise, emptied, cast aside.

Still, we kept windows open, and sometimes,
hope did fly inside.
But wings were after all wings,

their stay was but for a while.
And so,
when stark reality found us the bottomless hole,
idealism seemed but a funny hopeless flight.
With open hearts, we let out the light,
yet death brought back only the lonely night:
the sun was lost, love had died,
not much was left neither will, nor pride.

Maybe we should derive solace,
that at least the Universe is just,
spreading equal joys, equal sorrows on every
side;
to you and me and countless others,
to receive together with humbled,
smiling eyes.

But maybe.
Or, maybe not.
Is disappearance the only solution?
Into nothingness,
into emptiness,
into the disgrace of suicide.
No?
Then whom to blame?

Once too happy to sell ourselves to faceless
illusions,
nameless ideas, useless lives,
we now stand naked in the marketplace
asking where have the souls gone?
Why it hurts,
why the roses are just silent thorns?
Our dreams do not have the capacity to commit
such treason:

only we can –
with our maneuvers, our fear and cowardice.
Once left to rot,
their ghosts now stare us in the eye,
and yet we ask ourselves why they stink?
Why don't they hide?

It's not just poetry that has become dark.
Our soul too has donned the unending night ...

# Delusion Angel

You open your eyes and the illusion is still
hung
in the nocturnal air.
Of dreams and selfishness,
of eternity and madness,
of self-fulfilment and happiness.

Mesmerized by the sheen of the Delusion Angel
you stretch your hand to catch the moment
as it passes by
in a stream of consciousness,
where nothing remains
except the reality of the Unreal.

And so as a captive

in the realm of the Nameless,
you detach yourself from the anonymity
of living and embrace death,
the Unknowable, to breathe once more
the spring's passing delight. Symbiotically.

Is it not a self-discovery that you and I stand
together above,
interconnected, like Siamese twins, like freaks,
suspending our own mortality
while the world below fades into a dense
oblivion?

Is it not an ever-lasting union that redeems
itself
as all dimensions dissolve into an emptiness
rich and bare?

Is it not the release we all want,
from the abscess on the soul that has suppurated
to expose
not just the gash, the blood, the disgust,
but the total, absolute, abject inescapabilty from
the Devil beneath?

Yet you ask me who am I?
Don't you,
don't you already know?

Why, I am the Significant Other,
illusion of the Delusion Angel.

# Untouchable

There was a desperately quiet loneliness
hidden from all and every leering eye, in the
bosom of the street,
as men and women walked past her,
the untouchable, the lowliest, used, discarded,
and then thrown out of view.

Like fake emotions that had dug a deep grave,
where still today
some poems lie buried among hollowed bones of
years past,
I too lay below layers and layers of an oblivious
face.
Yes, like that traveled street,
there was a lonely loneliness in my vacant
heart. And then, I found you.

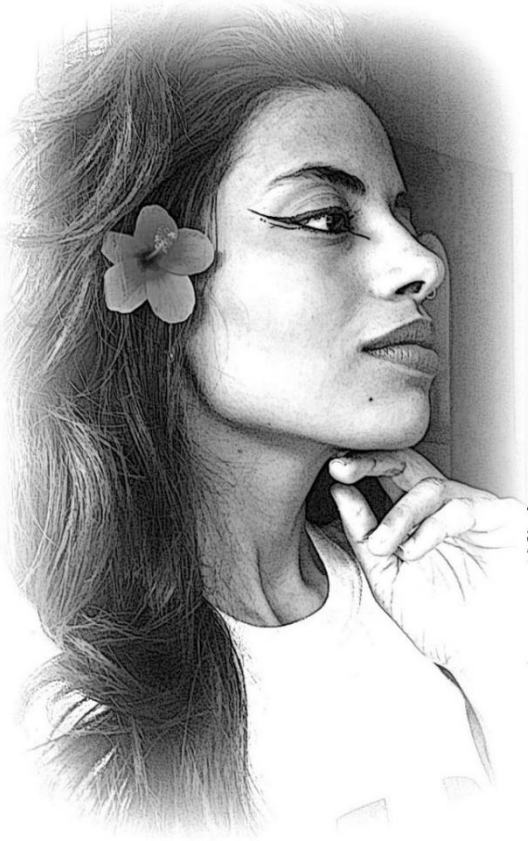
Soon nights and days disappeared;
the sun and moon merged in a union to last, and I
was born again,
this time without color or skin, rank and badge,
outer ornaments that finally grow dim.
Reborn, into your loving arms.
Into an all-accepting world,
where Spring was warm and the earth glistened like
fresh dew.

In such heat of the moment,
the world had no other choice but to grow silent,
with no contraptions to bind, no further lies,
no ugly truths.
The cruel wintertide,
heroic and noble in its brief bubble of existence,
then swept across,

freezing every word, stifling every sigh.
No, there was no other shade, no other difference to separate.
Crystallized. Blocked. Boxed. Everything was annihilated,
everything old and new.

I could have lived in this gloaming forever,
twinkling together with the transparent sky that now
flourished above,
in this newfound orb without boundaries and boxes
and directions flipped askew.
But lest the lingering coldness cut open my tender heart and
sully it,
you took me in, toward safety, toward home,
where a purple blood oozed out, purifying, protecting,
to cover, to imbue.

Baptized, I was now whole.
Ready to be. Ready to live.



# Apropos of Sentience

I hear the sound cry.
The wailing, loud, bare, sharp.

Resonating,
through apocrypha of tailored,
seemingly salutary facades of the
humane,
it is now at work,
though too late in piercing
eons of an unconscious conscience,
layer by layer, aggressively, nevertheless:
a dormant, stale, injured substratum,
much like the earth that stayed  silent
having lost its voice –
in the capacious, anthropogenic din of
subhuman noises
that, at this very moment,

are attempting to crack open its skull.
Toiling, persuasive, and deceptively kind,
they carry the demeanor of the saint –
killing it softly,
patiently,
violently.

The helpless, wordless, pithy, wailing cry
coming from me.
It has nowhere to go, but languish.
And the corridors of the mind –
how they have turned into barricades!
Each step, harder, entrenched;
each step, pain and more pain.
Can we prevent this disquieting death –
of earth and mind,
which once interpellated into a continuum
beyond space and time,

are now panting like a trauma-stricken
ghost,
in throes,
with one final, conscientious breath in
debt?

The dying eye has no answer;
it can only host reflections
of posthumous ecologies, like horrors
revisited,
banal, inanimate, paradoxical.
And ultimately, as futile as the wail.
If only a poultice on the skeleton could save
the soul!
Circles of dust and smoke though
do attempt to hide the red stains on it
as my quivering hands throttle,
finally.

Sore,
naked,
ghastly cut open,
I can see the insides splattered all over the
white sheets –
the poor, brave new world we created,
mindlessly,
within, without.
Everything stops spinning.

Silence.

But is that the gory end WE deserved?
No, something rises yet again:
the vegetative noises, in a crescendo this
time, stridently.
Their ambitions disentangle,
grating against the sleepy ear drums,

which begin to bleed.
Profusely, unstoppably through this sonic contact.
As if hit by a truck.
The rancid odor starts to fill up the air, the soundscape,
the human-animal, silent yet barking,
and I feel panic,
once relegated to the sidelines, taking form inside,
between the spaces
where the body was battered to pulp.

Nothing seems real now beyond that formidable exterior:
blending, interweaving, warping
all threads of the past,

the elegiac memories, the kaleidoscopic motifs
into a character proper of sorts that is
punctured yet whole,
that curiously wishes to disown yet reproduce
its acoustic legacy, telepathically.
One last time.
And then dispense with everything remotely
conscious,
aware, alive in the rickety body.

Singular in its garb,
the Phantom dons the color green,
 and reminisces of youth, of spring, of
freshness, of vitality –
of resurrection, of life,
a pathetic fallacy, an anomaly too glaring
in the passive, damaging act that was
our living.

The wind blows again through the old bellows,
stoking the remaining embers of our ethical
responsibility,
but they don't flicker; nor do they speak out
in this dystopian sin.

Maybe that's all we are left with:

A strangled nostalgia that never quits –
and some deaths that never live ...

The **End**

*Or may be not ...*

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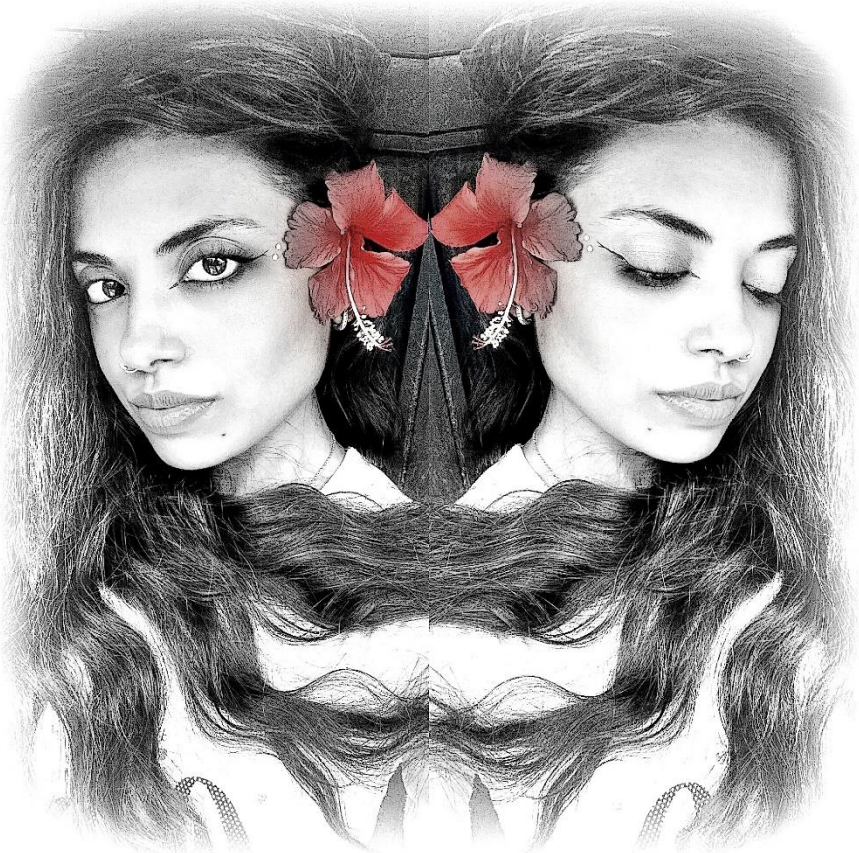

# WHITE *November*

A fairy tale

# WHITE

*November*